

THE ARCHEOLOGY OF MEMORY: DIRECTING *VIGILS* BY NOAH HAIDLE

by

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B.A., Texas Woman's University, 1999

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Fine Arts in Theater.

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THESIS APPROVAL

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Bobbi Masters

A Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Fine Arts
in the field of Theater

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TITLE: THE ARCHEOLOGY OF MEMORY: DIRECTING *VIGILS* BY NOAH HAIDLE

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Olusegun Ojewuyi

The Archeology of Memory...details the process of directing *Vigils*, which was presented on the Moe Stage at Southern Illinois University from September 15-18, 2016. This document records the process from play analysis through post-production evaluation.

This document is chronological in order with a preface which explains my introduction and interest in the play. Chapter one is the pre-production work, including the research and analysis and the theories employed. Chapter two details the process from predesign meetings to the performances. Chapter three is an evaluation of the process and the lessons learned. Appendices include visual and aural research, production documentation and photographs.

DEDICATION

In remembrance of my mother, Sharon Ann Masters, and dedicated to my daughter, Elyse Ariel Hutton.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my advisor, Segun Ojewuyi for not only pushing me but also guiding me along the way. I will continue to shoot the soldiers right in front of me.

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Thank you to the cast and crew of *Vigils*.

Finally, thank you to my husband, Eric Cope.

PREFACE

I have been drawn to this play for many years. I have been a fan of Noah Haidle's plays since seeing *Mr. Marmalade* at Kitchen Dog Theater (Dallas) in 1996. I remember appreciating the very dark humor of a young girl with an imaginary friend who just so happens to be a physically abusive, porn-addicted drug addict. Years later, I had the opportunity to see *Saturn Returns* at the Lincoln Center Theater and was shocked by his melancholic storytelling.

Vigils is a memory play. We learn about each of these characters through their memories. We learn what drives them, what they fear. As with most memory plays, we see how the memories can be distorted or romanticized. Memories are like photos, not in the sense that they are perfect representations but more how you see what you choose to see. Over the years, a memory may seem more of a photo-shopped version. The truth is still there but might be masked by what we choose to remember. We are a collection of our memories, they are what shape and inform us. It is easy to live in the past (revised or reality), we can even fantasize about our future, but it is oftentimes the present that is difficult. *Vigils* shows how memory haunts us.

Noah Haidle begins the play with Widow waiting for her date with Wooer. She is frustrated at herself for needing to keep Soul (her deceased husband) hostage. She knows that she should release it but is not ready to let go. Widow explains to Soul: "Every day I wake up and think maybe today is the day I won't remember. And it never is. Every day is the same. I wear the same black dress. I walk around in the same circles. One of these days I'm going to wear a hole in the floor" (7-8). It was important to me to physicalize this frustration. This circling was repeated in the blocking and the set design.

Body and Soul are also haunted by their memories. Soul is haunted by his actions as a husband and as a boy. Soul fell out of love with Widow and wanted to leave her after the miscarriage and as a boy he felt responsible for the death of his neighbor. He has a lot of guilt and is worried about how he will be judged. Body is so traumatized by his memories, he murders the imaginary child to protect her from her own memories (48). By the end of the play, the Wooer is now caught in his own struggles with memory and his cycle continues.

I kept returning to the idea of “wakefulness”. Widow tells the audience that she hardly sleeps anymore and does not dream since the death of her husband. Before his death, she would often dream of guiding others to fly. Flying dreams usually connote a sense of freedom, not being bound to the earth, having a supernatural ability. They can also connote a sense of spirituality. Since Widow does not dream any longer she stays tied to this reality. She relives her past with the flashes of memory. She tells Body that she has “tried so hard to forget” (37). She understands that she cannot hold onto Soul and still move forward. After two years of holding vigil, she is able to release him.

The world that Haidle creates has this dream-like state, not to mention the personification of Body and Soul. It is also worth noting that the only one with a name is Captain O’Reilly, the others are named only by their function: Widow, Wooer, Body, Soul, (the Grandfather and Mrs. Van Haften are more role-play). *Vigils* also relies less on the text or dialogue and more on the way that the story is being told. That is not to say that the lines are not important. There are a few instances when the dialogue reaches an almost poetic truthfulness; an example is Soul’s line, “Inside every second is an eternity” (18).

While I do not believe that theater should act as therapy, and I do not find it to be healthy or appropriate to bring one’s personal problems into the rehearsal space, this play does resonate

with me in that I identify with Widow. On a personal note, when I was in my twenties my boyfriend at the time died suddenly in a car accident. I held on to that grief and let it define me for a very long time. I know that I also romanticized and held this guy up to ridiculous standards that no one could ever match. I replayed memories of the past rather than living in the future. As I get older, I am better at understanding that it is easy to live in the past and worry about the future than it is to be mindful of the present. While I do not think that most of the audience (comprised mainly of young undergraduate students) have dealt with a lot of deep grief, I do think this story is very important because this is a very significant time in their lives. They are saying goodbye to their childhood and are taking steps towards adulthood. I think that they can identify with these pangs of letting go.

In her 1969 book, *On Death and Dying*, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross identified the five stages of loss: denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. There are many theories with the validity of these stages and the scientific proof but many agree that there are different phases. In the play, *Vigils*, Noah Haidle explores many different types of loss: the loss of a child through miscarriage and through the fire, loss of marriage, loss of spouse, and loss of identity. Noah Haidle has acknowledged that he wrote *Vigils* after the break-up with his girlfriend, Gillian, to whom he dedicates this play.

I wanted the audience to respond to this play on a visceral level. I wanted them to be swept up in the emotions of the play. The repetitions of the play encourage this by replaying the more difficult times of their marriage rather than telling the story in a more logical chronological order. The play is almost magical in its storytelling, and I wanted to keep the audience constantly surprised. I was fortunate to be also teaching this play to my THEA101 class at the time and was excited to hear their responses to the play. Most found the reading to be quite difficult with the

episodic quality and became frustrated, but this was not usually the case when they viewed the performance. Many were even surprised with the amount of humor in the script. On reading the script, there was some disagreement as to who was the protagonist. I also appreciated how they left the theater with questions. There was vocal debate about the ending of the play in the class following the production. At least a third of the class thought Widow killed herself (going into the light) while others thought it was her finally letting go. It was my intention to play with this idea. While I don't believe that Widow dies at the end, I must admit that I am pleased with the differing ideas.

According to Merriam-Webster, a vigil is “the act of keeping awake at times when sleep is customary” (“Vigil”). It also has religious connotations; vigils are usually kept the eve before a religious feast. Many religions observe a watch after a death, often referred to as wakes or viewings, where prayers are recited until the body is buried. It is a ritualistic memorial that keeps the body from being alone. According to Jewish beliefs, the soul is lost after the body dies and does not know where to go. Reading psalms or praying keeps the soul soothed and near the body until it is inurned. More secular types of vigils are now a common occurrence after a tragic event. Candlelight vigils act as a means to honor and bring a community together, think “Je suis Charlie” or “Boston Strong”. Vigils also play an interesting role dating back to ancient Rome. *Vigiles Urbani* were the fire watchers, who also maintained order in the city serving as vigilantes (Rainbird). This is noteworthy because Widow's husband was a firefighter and died in a blaze while searching for a child.

The style and form of the play are, what I think, to be the most exciting aspect of the play. As a story, it could be read as a simple parable. A widow struggles through her grieving process and learns how to navigate through it. However, Haidle reveals the pathway through a series of

memories. Soul and Widow struggle their way through the memories, wanting to only remember the good. But Body reminds us that, “We’re not in control of what we remember and what we forget” (19). Body keeps repeating his final moment alive, searching for the crying baby in the burning house. Soul keeps being reminded of how often he masturbated. Widow’s memories are intertwined with the present and those that shaped her- the memory of her planting marigolds¹ with her grandfather, the high school dance, sex in the backseat of the car with Body, Thanksgiving dinner, the day after a fight/the last time she saw him alive. Haidle also shows us memories of events that we saw live and changes the points-of-view. The accounts of the high school dance are told differently by Widow and Body. The better dancer changes depending on who is telling the story. Another retelling moment is when Soul misinterprets the dialogue when Widow and Wooer leave for their first date.

This non-linear, non-realistic approach adds to the excitement to the storytelling. The audience follows a story and then sees it repeated, but always differently. The character’s memories have a similar approach to the audience. The audience experiences the randomness and may feel the same frustrations as the characters. Masturbating, again? The style is reminiscent of *Rashomon*, where the plot is varied and even contradictory according to who is telling it. I think this is similar to memories. Two people may have attended the same event or conversation and experienced it quite differently. The audience is left questioning which is the

¹ The marigold (flower of the dead) is the traditional flower of *Dia de los Muertos*, the Latin American holiday known as “Day of the Dead”. It is thought that the scent and color of the marigold acts as guide the souls to their altars. The holiday originated in Mexico and, rather than mourn the death of a loved one, it celebrates their life.

truth. In a sense, it makes the audience participatory. They are witnessing the play and, like most theater, experience it differently. Haidle even acknowledges this play with Body's line, "This play hurts us so bad" (49).

During my course of studies, I have learned many approaches to directing that have had a deep impact on me. Certainly, Kama Ginkas' *Provoking Theatre: Kama Ginkas Directs*, Anne Bogart's *A Director Prepares*, and *The Necessity of Theater: The Art of Watching and Being Watched* by Paul Woodruff helped shaped how I see and approach my work. It is the work of Antonin Artaud, Katie Mitchell and Arthur Lessac methodologies that I hoped to implement into the process.

I wanted to apply Artaud's theory, especially the idea of physical language. Artaud describes this as "everything that occupies the stage, everything that can be manifested and expressed materially on a stage and that is addressed first of all to the senses instead of being addressed primarily to the mind as is the language of words" (Artaud 39). Artaud argued that feelings lose their power when they are formed into words. The stage picture communicates just as much as the text. It is an emotional poetic reaction, not always logical.

Over the summer I had the opportunity to train with the Lessac Institute. While it was a one-month intensive covering voice and movement, I wanted to apply some of the movement theory. Lessac theorized the different types of body energies (NRGs)- radiancy, potency, and buoyancy. I hoped to merge Artaud and Lessac theory to shape and influence the actor's physical presence in space.

Another method I wanted to apply to directing this show was the prep work as outlined in Katie Mitchell's book, *The Director's Craft*. Mitchell is a big proponent of pre-production work.

The more prepared you are, the easier the process will be. “Thorough preparation does not work against the creativity or input of the actors in rehearsals; instead it feeds, focuses and inspires the actors’ work’ (Mitchell 2). My advisor, Segun Ojewuyi, often reminds me that I need to be the expert of this production. I can only make decisions after being informed and educated. Mitchell begins the process with a list of questions and answers. These will help inform all decisions from actor’s objectives to the chronology. She also implements image tracking and uses them to help shape the “big ideas”. With all of the information prepared, Mitchell then pares it down, simplifies it to a simple and basic idea. I think in the past, I have relied on gut/intuitive response and not approached a question logically. When you are the expert of the production, you will approach the work with the confidence needed.

The biggest challenge that I faced was the staging. This show has flying, fire, flowers growing, a suicide, a roof that collapses (several times) as well as a door that gets axed down (also several times). The memories within memories also posed as a challenge. I wanted to solve a lot of the difficult technical elements with projections: fire, flying, flowers, etc. I also wanted to streamline and simplify some things. There is a lot going on, but I did not want the play to feel bogged down. I thought it would be suitable to find the basics (outline for costumes) and minimal props and set. Since this was the first time working with this many collaborators, it would also be a challenge. I am usually limited by resources, financially and otherwise, so it would be a different process for me. I have grown accustomed to working with the same designers and actors and have developed a short-hand in communicating with them. With this process, I would be working with a variety of people at different stages of their development.

This is more than a memory play, it is also about memory. We manipulate memory either by romanticizing or avoidance. Memory is highly susceptible to suggestions and influences who we

are. Dreams are memories run amok. I think *Vigils* addresses all of these things in a poignant, funny and even hopeful way and I was excited to be working on this project.

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CHAPTER ONE

PRE-PRODUCTION: RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

I began the process with a series of questions. The first set of questions involved why this show, why now? Like most directors, I have a list of shows that I would like to direct (*Mother Courage*, anything by playwright, Naomi Wallace, obscure plays by the likes of John Guare and John Patrick Shanley and Jacob Jununten's play *In the Shadow of His Language*), but when asked which was my first choice, I decided *Vigils*. As previously mentioned, I had been drawn to this play for many years. The dark humor mixed with sadness appealed to me. This creative balance, as well as Noah Haidle's method of storytelling, was very exciting. Haidle interweaves the philosophical with the profane. One of my favorite parts of the play is when Body and Widow are reliving their Thanksgiving memory while Soul looks on with commentary on the very nature of existence:

Soul- *This is happiness.*

Widow- There's plenty more stuffing.

Soul- *It's not some time in the future.*

Widow- My grandmother taught me to make the gravy without any lumps.

Soul- *This very second.*

Body- What's the secret?

Soul- *Inside every second is an eternity.*

Widow- I'll never tell (Haidle 18). [italics are mine for emphasis]

This touching moment segues straight into another masturbating scene, this time with an even dirtier magazine. Haidle also subverts the tragic by making it ridiculous. An example of this is when Widow is freshening up in the bathroom before her date and Wooer asks why she and her husband never had children:

Wooer- (Calling into the bathroom) You two never thought about having any children?

Widow- (Calling back) What? (The speak loudly through the door until she comes out. You get it I'm sure.)

Wooer- You said he was your only family. I was just wondering if you two ever thought about having children.

Widow- I had a miscarriage a long time ago. Sometimes at night I think I can hear my baby crying.

Wooer- I'm so sorry. I had no idea you had a miscarriage.

Widow- It's not your fault. How could you have known?

Wooer- I know, but I'm sorry anyway.

Widow- Thanks. That's sweet of you to say. (The Widow comes back, sort of fresh but sort of streaky with makeup.) (13)

This conversation, which should be intimate and private is yelled through the space. By creating distance between them, Haidle subverts the tragedy of miscarriages. *Vigils* never takes itself too seriously. Although the play deals with death and loss, it is also very funny. Widow's journey as she navigates her way through the grief is something with which I think many can

identify. As my process developed, I started thinking of all the other types of female journeys, most notably *Wizard of Oz* and *Alice in Wonderland*.

Widow's journey also became more personal as my process grew. Shortly after submitting my show titles for season selection, I had moved my parents from Texas to be closer to me. When I was home over the summer, I could tell that their health was deteriorating. I was able to set them up in a senior living facility in Evansville and within a few months my father had a leg amputated, and my mother died a little over a year later. I always say that theater is not therapy. You shouldn't bring your problems with you to work. And while I still believe that's true, I do think that theater shapes us. *Vigils* helped prepare me for my own journey of losing my mother. Although it has been difficult, I know that I am responsible for how I choose to remember my mother. While it's still very fresh in mind, I don't think I will be haunted by the memories. Because the process of her dying was a very slow process, I was allowed a sense of closure.

As previously mentioned, Katie Mitchell's book, *The Director's Craft* played a huge part in not only how I approached *Vigils* but also in my development and growth as an artist. Mitchell is a big proponent of pre-production work. The more prepared you are, the easier the process will be. "Thorough preparation does not work against the creativity or input of the actors in rehearsals; instead it feeds, focuses and inspires the actors' work" (Mitchell 2). Segun Ojewuyi often reminded me that I needed to be the expert of this production. I can only make decisions after being informed and educated. Mitchell begins the process with a list of questions and answers (for a complete list see Appendix A). Here are a sample of my questions:

Why purple dress? (Haidle 7)

Why sing *Killing Me Softly*? (16)

Why did Soul talk to pigeons rather than go to heaven? (28)

Why *Rigoletto*? (40)

What does the “sea of marigolds” represent? (53)

Hopefully, the script can also provide answers to the questions but not always. If a question could be answered, I moved it to the facts or answers list. Some answers or facts of the play include:

Husband dies 2 years ago in the fall (7)

Widow had miscarriage (13)

Widow dreams that her husband lies in bed next to her but can't remember her dreams (24)

Widow was going to name baby after Samuel Clemens (30)

Wooer uses the same pet name her husband uses, “Marigold” (43)

Wooer has been waiting his whole life for “someone to love” (53)

I implemented Artaud's physical language through the repeated patterns of blocking. For example, while searching for Child, Body moves in a clockwise pattern. I wanted Widow to also mirror the circular pattern but chose to reverse it in a counter-clockwise direction. Both would hit at certain spots of the stage: Body starts in doorway, crosses SR of bed, crosses CSL for “I'm just doing my job” pose, circling the table, crossing SL of bed, and this repeats until he observes the burning planet, Mars. Artaud also discusses the use of “hieroglyphs”. I utilized this idea with the repeated memories; examples of this were Body's shaving sequence and Wooer's miscarriage/bathroom sequence.

Like Haidle, Artaud believed that theater should not merely replicate life; it should be bigger than life, it should be a spectacle. In an interview with the Chicago Tribune, Haidle says, "I want to do something that isn't trying to represent reality. That is more a poetic transposition of reality" (Adler). Unlike cinema, which Artaud believed a truer portrayal as realism, theater should be the oppositional, of "what is not" (Artaud 98). There is no subtlety in a Hieronymus Bosch painting or an Alfred Jarry production. Artaud encouraged digging deeper into meaning, to strip away all artifices (including sometimes the text), akin to an exorcism.

Since moving to the Midwest, I have become active with Southeastern Theater Conference (SETC). I had been attending workshops and served on the Directing Committee. I found myself attending more acting workshops as way of working with actors with different backgrounds and training styles.

In 2015 attended a masterclass led by renowned voice teacher, Kristin Linklater. I found the work challenging and exciting; it prompted me to study more voice work. I have been very interested in breath work so I was looking for a method that also included physical work. That is when I discovered the Lessac method. Arthur Lessac was a voice teacher, but his method, kinesensic, incorporated the body. In 2016 I was one of twelve accepted into the summer intensive at DePauw University. It was 164 hours (or three- three hour graduate courses) of body movement and esthetics, development of speaking voice, speech training, language and expressiveness and most of all, applied text explorations. It was taught by Master Teacher, Deborah Kinghorn and Certified Trainers, Crystal Robbins and Caroline Good. I was eager to take what I had learned over the summer and apply it *Vigils*.

Form as a Means of Subversion

Vigils does not necessarily evoke the traditional image of a feminist play. For one, it was written by a man. Two, it has only one female character. There are three men and a gender unspecified child and the child and woman do not interact. It presents a modern female protagonist; she does not have all the answers and she may not be a reliable source. She could be viewed as weak and suicidal because she struggles with being alone. For these reasons, this play would not pass the Bechdel Test¹. Cartoonist Alison Bechdel created the test to apply to any sort of fiction. To pass the test the work must feature two named women who talk about anything but a man.

However, the style of the play is very much in line with traditional feminist plays. I wanted to explore form and how it is used to either promote or subvert the status-quo. Style is often used by feminist playwrights as a means of resistance to the patriarchal canon. Haidle's play is non-linear, thereby defying the Westernized conventional (masculine) norms. The present is interwoven through a series of memories. The unorganized and chaotic interruptions disrupt an otherwise simple story. Our brains are hardwired to find the order in the chaos, but when playwrights play with the order some find it frustrating. When female writers get too stream-of-

¹ The Bechdel Test, also known as the Bechdel-Wallace Test, was popularized in the Alison Bechdel's graphic comic, *Dykes to Watch Out For*. The test, which was originally associated with movies but has encompassed more pop-culture, checks women's autonomy. To pass the Bechdel Test, a work must "1) have at least two women in it, who 2) talk to each other, about 3) something other than a man" (Garber, *Atlantic*).

conscious they can be attacked for lacking respect for tradition (see Judith Butler). I would go on to examine structuralism and the feminist response.

Chaos Theory

Since our origins, people have been looking for order amongst chaos. This is how we have survived as a species. We study the landscape looking for what dangers may be lurking. It is innate to search for the lion amongst the veldt. When there is order, there is safety. Order is one of the levels of Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs". In 1943 Andrew Maslow created a hierarchy of needs that includes the Biological and Physiological, Safety, Love and Belongingness, Esteem and Self-Actualization (McLeod). Order falls under the second from the most fundamental, safety. Only after one has the physiological: food, water and air, can they look beyond themselves. We see patterns that allow us to make quick judgements. Recognizing these patterns is part of our evolutionary development. In the twentieth century, quantum physics introduced the "chaos theory" and the reliance of order was questioned. "Concurrent with this paradigm shift, the borders of containing patriarchal constructs of power were also being transgressed by the rising tides of feminist thought and practice- initiating a re-visioning of history" (Perrault 46). Science has now proved the world is non-linear. Our natural world is not static but continues to breathe, grow, and respond. This argument is usually supported through Edward Lorenz's² "butterfly effect" wherein something seemingly inconsequential can have a major impact on the

² Edward Lorenz was a meteorologist in 1961 studying weather patterns using a computer model. He noticed that when he rounded up the numbers by a single decimal point there were drastic changes. He is considered the "Father of Chaos". For more information see James Gleick's book, *Chaos*.

future (think *Back to the Future*). Hence, the future is not fixed, therefore not part of a linear structure.

Rule-Makers

In the *Poetics*, Aristotle presents his requirements for drama. We are familiar with his six elements: spectacle, idea, music, language, character, and the most important, plot. Plot, for Aristotle, must be whole and well-constructed with a beginning, middle and end. This structure follows the harmony found in nature. If the plot is episodic, that is “without probable or necessary sequence” (Aristotle 29) it is attributed to the bad poet. For Aristotle, beauty corresponded to order. Later in the seventeenth century, the French Academy implemented more rules as a means to return the French theatre to a more classical (i.e. Greek and Roman) approach. In three discourses, the Academy outlined the unities– time, place, and action. The Neoclassicists called for verisimilitude, a truthfulness, while adhering to a five-act outline. Later, the *pièce bien faite*, or well-made play became the norm. In the nineteenth century, Gustav Freytag diagrammed plot patterns with his pyramidal structure– Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Denouement. In Freytag’s *Technique of the Drama* he argues that, “The dramatic action must represent all that is important to the understanding of the play, in the strong excitement of the characters, and in a continuously progressive increase of effects” (Dukore 807). Freytag organized the popular pattern in which drama was typically fashioned. With the influence of Freud, this drama eventually developed into something more complex– psychological realism.

Rise of Realism

The rules established by the formalists and their predecessors culminated in the rise of realism. Theaters strove for authenticity, which eventually changed how actors were trained (psychological realism) and also how plays were written. Henrik Ibsen, often labeled “the father of realism”, stopped writing in verse in the 1870s so his works could be grounded in reality. He followed the well-made play aesthetic but also incorporated symbolism in his social-problem plays. In France, Emile Zola, was pushing for a “slice-of-life” with his move towards naturalism.

“Realism is prescriptive in that it reifies the dominant culture’s inscription for traditional power relations between genders and classes” (Dolan 84). The mimesis, as constructed, was to mirror the real-world. Mimesis applied to all aspects of theater, most notably design and acting. However, this real-world aesthetic was still from a male’s perspective. The patriarchal society reflected back from the stage and this mirroring codified the roles for women in society. The theater itself seemed to have been created for the male gaze. The Greek playwrights wrote of many strong female characters, but we must remember that although masked, they were performed by men. Westernized theater as traditionally viewed, then, was written by men for men. The space conforms the audience to the male gaze. There is a separation between the gazer and the object while you watch a play written by a man and most likely directed by a man. These norms were ingrained in the theater and society. Patriarchy existed and supported not only what was produced onstage but also its very form.

Bertolt Brecht, although not a feminist, challenged this norm by introducing vignettes and nonlinear plays while allowing the actors to comment on the actions. There is no catharsis in Brecht’s theory (not always successful in practice). He viewed theater as a tool for teaching not

purely as entertainment. It is only natural that Brecht was very influential to the feminist theater practitioners and theorists³.

Haidle's approach is similar to Jerzy Grotowski's "poor" theater where the relationship between onstage and off is prized, an intimacy with the audience and actors. Another critic of the theater's realism is Polish writer and artist, Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz, who urges us to break the mold of realism and pushes for a "fantastic psychology and action" (Dukore 974). Theater should not be a place limited by logic, but rather freed by the imagination (or subconscious). He often compares this new call for the theater with a cubist Picasso painting, a portrait of a woman but in odd shapes. Witkiewicz wants his audience to exit the theatre feeling they just witnessed a dream, similar to Artaud where he makes the ordinary fantastical.

This fantasy, other-worldness, is also found in Surrealism. All of the characters accept Body and Soul as characters in this world, no one questions it. Surrealism juxtaposes the real with the fantasy with more emphasis on metaphors and themes (more on themes later). The French poet, Guillaume Apollinaire, coined the term in 1917, but it was Andre Breton in splitting from the Dadaists who defined surrealism as "the transmutation of those two seemingly contradictory states, dream and reality, into a sort of absolute reality... the best hope for the human spirit" (Chambers). As an audience we respond viscerally, not necessarily logically.

³ It is worth noting that while Brecht's techniques are often associated with the feminist movement he has been criticized for exploiting the work with his collaborators, most notably Elisabeth Hauptmann (the translator of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*). See John Fuegi's book, *Brecht & Co.* for more examples.

Feminist Response

Feminist writers and critics often reject Aristotelian theories, arguing that they do not reflect their experiences but serve only to promote the patriarchal ideals. Feminist theorists respond by creating work that does not follow links in a chain (Hélène Cixous likens the linear construction to an umbilical cord). This instability forces a convergence of realities. There can be no absolute truth because the truth is constantly shifting. Feminist plays can belong in many different worlds, anyplace where past and present can coexist. These disparate worlds are prevalent in *Vigils*. The play takes place in the present—the apartment of Widow (only half-realized) and in various memories at different times and perspectives. “Time in this sense lives, breathes, matters in space, and explodes the concept of linearity in performance, crumbling traditional patterns of representing time as a fixed entity” (Perrault 53). Because time is not fixed, it can loop around and repeat itself, as cyclical. If the audience can realize that their destiny is not fixed, then there is room for change. One could argue that making even minute choices onstage, applying feminist theory practices, could serve as an act of subversion. For feminist theoreticians, art is not a reflection of society because the perception is always in flux. American essayist and author, Cheri Register, defined feminist criticism as adhering to at least one of the following: “(1) serves a forum for women; (2) help to achieve cultural androgyny; (3) provide role-models; (4) promote sisterhood; and (5) augment consciousness-raising” (Austin 22). This idea of what promotes feminism (and even feminism itself) is always expanding and codified in various way. One popular example is the Bechdel Test.

One can see the feminist response through form. Whereas the masculine writing style is traditionally viewed as linear, feminine writing is frequently circular. This roundness is found in nature in the female form. The circle is repeated in ideas and experiences and not necessarily

directed towards a climax. In *Feminism and Theater*, Sue-Ellen Case likens this process to an orgasm. The style and form either supports or subverts societal standards. The cyclical structure is embodied through the work. The form is then free of rules. Cixous's *l'écriture féminine* subverts the patriarchal norm. "Writing with the female body allows for an excessive flow of blood, birth, and sexual metaphors in a nonlinear, florid and stream-of-consciousness style that inscribes sexual difference as the content and form of cultural feminist theatre" (Dolan 8). Cixous combats the male gaze by using the body as a tool. This changes the storytelling. Storytelling becomes more kinesthetic. By telling their story, women gain the ability to fly. I will be using the English translation "fly" versus the French "steal" since flying plays a prominent role in *Vigils*. The style allows for the use of symbols and signs to convey meaning without having to rely on the text. When realism is replaced with *gestus* and idea, plot becomes secondary. This technique is another example of Brecht's potential influence on Haidle.

Attacks/Butler

In her 1997 essay, "Further Reflections on Conversations of Our Time", Judith Butler argues that there is power in the repeatable. In an earlier essay, she describes how gender is performed as a series of repeatable acts. For Butler, gender is fluid and unstable. Butler calls for a radical shift in symbols themselves. If we change the signifiers, the sign is therefore changed. Butler's writing style also seems loosely constructed. This, combined with her use of perspicacious language, can make her work difficult to read. Critics have often attacked Butler for being "ponderous and obscure" (Nussbaum) and dismissed for not writing for a non-academic or popular audience. She is criticized not only for content but also style (which challenges the gender normative). In addition, critics disregard Butler's work for ending her essays with too many questions and not enough answers. It is as if her critics charge her for not spoon-feeding

and digesting the ideas for them. Butler is accused of being incomprehensible for the purpose of being self-important. She is dismissed for her views of subverting the heteronormative. Critics argue, why subvert one part of society and not others? Butler is mocked for both being a “quietest”, not speaking up against perceived bias, and for her calls for subversion, as though women should be content with the status-quo. “Butler's self-involved feminism is extremely American, and it is not surprising that it has caught on here, where successful middle-class people prefer to focus on cultivating the self rather than thinking in a way that helps the material condition of others” (Nussbaum). This statement constitutes something of an attack on Butler, but it also seems directed towards fourth-wave feminists. Fourth-wave or post-modern feminism is generally viewed as being more individualistic than the previous waves.

I include these attacks on Butler to show the vitriol that potentially arises when someone rails against the norm. Butler did not follow the standards assigned to her as an academic writer or as a feminist. She broke the rules and was publicly ridiculed. She was attacked by other writers and other feminists. I have a hard time believing that this sort of public shaming would have been the same had Butler's essay been written by a man. Challenging the norm, either subversively or superficially, is key for growth and change. Butler's words may not have been clear (or entirely original) but her message is unmistakable.

This is important as others find their own voice. In April 2016, Chantal Bilodeau wrote in *Howlround* about how she's “breaking up with Aristotle”. Bilodeau argues that Aristotle's worldview is not representative in today's culture, “Can we, writers, say something new, something of value, if we don't break free from that mold?” The heterarchical should replace the hierarchical so that creativity can flourish. It is not surprising that she lists Noah Haidle as one of the current playwrights playing challenging form. Bilodeau asks, “If we are to change our culture

and the stories that create culture, it follows that we also need to change how we tell those stories”. It is worth noting (and Bilodeau herself acknowledges⁴) that challenging the traditional linear or causal form is not a new idea. Even before the surrealists, playwrights such as August Strindberg were experimenting with different modes of storytelling. I expected that this non-linear form could be new and somewhat confusing to a lot of our younger college student audience. I was mindful and excited about exploring form’s potential effect on our audience through my exploration of structuralism and the feminist response in my approach to *Vigils*.

Problem-Feminist Play

The play can be viewed as problematic as a feminist work like the works of Ibsen, Shaw, Strindberg, and Williams, which also feature women as “the problem” cited by Kim Solga in her book, *Theatre & Feminism* (39). The women in the plays are the source of the drama and therefore need to be saved or cured. This assumption derives from the hero-myth often found in the hyper-masculine, Westernized theater canon. Some may argue that Wooer serves as the hero, as a catalyst for change. Therefore, according to this criteria the play may not be considered to be feminist. I would argue that the Widow does have autonomy throughout the play (however misguided she may appear to be).

⁴ “The idea is not new. Many playwrights—including Beckett, Churchill, Pinter, and Kushner, just to name a few—have played with form. But they did so in isolation and it could be argued that their concern was mainly aesthetic. In contrast, what we need today is a conscious use of dramatic structure in service of societal change” (Bilodeau).

I believe that this play deals with materialist feminism. This theory is used to study women's role in society and how economic constraints are applied. Although it is never explicit, there is a certain privilege with Widow. We do not see her struggling financially. She is educated and cultured. Widow does not have a career. She is domestically tied to the house (similar to Soul). The setting takes place in her apartment and in memories. She does not appear to have female friendships. There are two other women referred to in the script, Widow's grandmother and Soul's memory of Mrs. Van Haften, both are dead.

I planned on staging it with a young girl as the Child, but she too is killed. However, there is sexual symmetry at play here. Widow begins the play as broken and incomplete, struggling to move past the death of her husband. The play ends with Wooer in a similar situation. Another example of symmetry is Wooer appearing just as nervous about his first (and subsequent) dates with Widow as she. In the flashback scenes, we see multiple sides of the same woman: Widow as a child, a teenager, a wife and finally a Widow. In most of the flashback sequences we see her as autonomous. She is not a victim of society but rather herself.

The protagonist is a woman. As subject, she holds power over Soul. The play deals with a miscarriage and the effect it had on the couple. Both Widow and Body would hear the cries of the child. This is what ultimately kills Body. However, Widow is married, which according to French anthropologist, Claude Levi-Strauss, is a form of gift-exchange (Austin 44). Levi-Strauss developed the structuralist theory and theorized that women are what brings tribes together. Widow and Body married because of cultural norms. They decided to marry because she was pregnant. We do not know if there were conversations about other options available to her. Soul admits to Widow that he wanted to leave after the miscarriage but stayed because she was depressed. That guilt continues to haunt him.

Widow is also shown as object through her nighttime rituals with Soul. Like a mother, she kisses him goodnight before putting him to bed. When Wooer describes picking out flowers for his date, he corrects his cousin, “This isn’t a girl, this is a woman” (Haidle 10). He then proceeds to buy a dozen long-stemmed roses, he views Widow as an object rather than subject. I am sure he did not mean it to be anything other than his lack of experience or excitement, but what does it mean to be a “woman” as defined by Wooer? This microaggression is further compounded by the fact that to woo Widow, he needs roses. The most troubling transaction is when Soul gives his approval for Wooer to date Widow. The Body also seems to objectify women with his use of pornography material; the magazines he uses for his masturbation memories get exceedingly more graphic.

Semiotics have a large role in this play. Prop and costume pieces were intended to serve as signifiers for the characters. The set requirements consist of a window (representing escape) and a trunk (representing captivity). I also wanted the table to serve as a physical manifestation of a collection of the memories— the Wooer’s flowers stay on the table (later replaced with dead copies), as well as the Thanksgiving plates and the doggie bag of tacos. Widow’s costume would have binding across the chest juxtaposed with the flowy bottom and most fittingly, she holds the key to the trunk around her neck (like an albatross?). In Widow’s final scene, I had her in a hot pink sweater, as a callback to the pink found in the Child’s dress. My hope was to compare the Widow with the child that Body later kills. Body wears a firefighter uniform. By naming the characters as the function that they serve, they are each a sign: Widow, Body, Soul, and Wooer. Although none of the characters are identified through their gender roles, these epithets could be another example of Brecht’s influence.

It is also important to address the universal theme of the play. It is not about a woman or a woman's issue, rather it is a play about loss and recovery. This theme is a "universal". It is something that everyone in every society and culture experiences. This universality is often implemented by playwrights striving for successful identification with the audience. The message or idea overrides many of the other elements. This is not just for personal success but also the financial. If a show is considered too narrowed in focus (or too feminine) then it will most likely not recoup investments for the producers. Theater is, after all, a very capitalist enterprise.

Theory

Artaud believed that theater should wake up the nerves and hearts of the audience.

We want to make out of the theater a believable reality which gives the heart and the senses that kind of concrete bite which all true sensation requires. In the same way that our dreams have an effect upon us and reality has an effect upon our dreams which will be efficacious to the degree that it can be projected with the necessary violence. And the public will believe in the theater's dream on condition that it take them for true dreams and not for a servile copy of reality; on condition that they allow the public to liberate within itself the magical liberties of dreams which it can only recognize when they are imprinted with terror and cruelty (quoted in Artaud 85-86).

Because loss is a universal experience, I thought the audience would have some sort of catharsis. They would follow the character's journey but, because of the path, they would stay engaged. I believed the form was what would wake-up the hearts and nerves since it is

something that audiences do not typically see onstage. The storytelling being dynamic and non-linear with an autonomous female protagonist, I contend that *Vigils* is a feminist play.

Themes

There are many recurring themes that I tracked in *Vigils*, starting most obviously with the title itself. As mentioned earlier, many cultures and religions have their own customs associated with vigil or honoring the dead. For instance, the Jewish faith has the “kavod ha-met” which is meant to show respect for the death and the “nihum avelim” to comfort the living. According to custom, once a person dies, a “shomerin” stays with the body to guard it until burial. In *Vigils*, Widow acts as the shomerin. Although not for the altruistic motives usually associated with the ritual, she does keep Soul safely locked away in a box. The shomerin fasts while with the body so as not to mock the dead. We do not see Widow eating food. There is a shared memory of a Thanksgiving feast, but we do not see her eat onstage. She and Wooer leave the house for tacos at Ernesto y Ernesto. We do see her drink only gin and tonic while she nervously waits for her first date. The period between the death and the burial is called “aninut” and usually does not exceed two days. I think the “two” is important here since it has been two years since her husband’s death. During the mourning process, it is traditional in Jewish practices to tear at one’s clothing. It is worth noting that the clothes of Soul and Widow are torn during their offstage scuffle. Another tradition is the meal of condolence, “se’udat havra’ah”. It is served by a close relative or friend and consists of eggs (symbol of life) and bread (sustenance for life). There are no eggs or bread in *Vigils*, but there are tacos, which we will discuss later with the Latin influences.

Catholics also observe a vigil or “wake”. This idea of a wake is very important. It connotes the period of sleeplessness. Widow remarks that she doesn’t sleep anymore. She seems stuck in a

limbo, not ready to let go of the memory of her husband. Another Catholic practice is to leave a window open to allow the souls of loved ones to retrieve the other soul. Widow leaves her window open in *Vigils*, and that's how Soul makes its escape.

There are many phases of mourning that guide the mourners through the grieving process- shiva, shloshim, and avelut. I think we see Widow at various stages of her grieving.

Vigils is not an overtly religious play, but there are many Christian aspects. The most obvious religious element is the characterization of Soul. A soul is generally defined as the spiritual essence of a being. Theologian Thomas Aquinas believed that the human soul is immortal. His goal is to escape this purgatory that Widow has imposed on him and ascend to heaven. Soul tells Widow:

Soul- A soul is not supposed to stay on earth after the body dies.

Widow- I'm sorry. I need you.

Soul- I told her that I need to go.

Widow- I just need to remember for a little while.

Soul- It's been more than a little while. And I can't forget anything that I ever did in my entire life. And I don't know whether what I did was good or bad. Whether what I accomplished on earth was of any good to anyone (24).

Other societies going back to the Iron Age (Eighth century BCE) also theorized the soul as being separate and leaving the body. In the tomb of Kuttamuwa there is an inscription to the mourners to commemorate his life and afterlife with a feast "for my soul that is in this stele"

(Funerary Monument). One could argue that when Body kills the Child it is done as a sort of sacrifice.

There are many Latin influences in the play. Most notable is the “Magic Realism”. Magic Realism began as a hyper-realistic art movement but is now mostly associated as a literary genre that merges fantasy with realistic fiction. Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s masterpiece novel, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, is probably the most well-known. The stories are often allegorical or fables with a social relevance. The narrator can also insert themselves into the story or otherwise play with the structure to break any semblance of realism. Wooer introduces Widow to the Ernestos. Legend has it, the brothers, both named Ernesto, swam to the United States from Ecuador on a surfboard. One of the brothers lost his arm to a shark attack. The brothers opened a taco shop, and this where Wooer takes Widow on their first date. It is a seemingly simple story, but I think Haidle adds it as an allegory of the human spirit. The Ernesto’s persevere, and eventually Widow does too, and we hope for Wooer.

Dreams are another recurring theme. Dreams of flying are one of the most common dreams. They rank as number 8 of the most common at 49.9%. Unlike falling, which is based on fear, flying is often associated with happiness (Maggiolini 95). These dreams are often interpreted as freedom or liberation. For men, they are often associated with erections and coitus fantasies for women (Schredl 486). There is a notable gender difference with flying dreams. They are reported more often with men than women. In Schredl’s study, she found that 66.2 men reported flying dreams, compared with 63.0 women. There is a theory that flying dreams are common because of the physical sensation of the body relaxing, in a stage of lucid dreaming.

Memories have imprisoned Widow. “Memories are thoughts that arise” (Tolle) but I would argue that they are not factual, they contort over time. They are reimagined. “When we

remember specific events from our past, recalling their spatial and temporal context or recollecting perceptual or conceptual details of those events, our memory is considered to be episodic in nature” (Payne 290). Payne goes on to theorize that the memories we wish to recall are often those emotionally charged and as such are not encoded properly. The best conditions for memory consolidation happens during the sleep cycle. Payne’s study found that the brain consolidates the most emotionally significant and binds them together episodically. “This finding may help us understand why memory for central, emotional information is often remembered at the expense of background details” (Payne 293).

Character

Each of these characters struggles to be free. They are all linked to one another and cannot escape. They are all trapped by their memories and the fears of what they represent. It is worth noting again that the characters are named according to their role- Widow, Wooer, Soul, Body and Child. The only character that has a proper name is Captain O’Reilly who is portrayed by Body and Mrs. Van Haften who is portrayed by Widow. The characters also struggle with self-doubt and fear. None of the major characters feel like they are prepared for their next step- Widow struggles with letting go, Soul whether he will be judged, Body whether or not he’s a hero, Widow whether he is able to love and be loved.

WIDOW- wants to be free. She is frustrated; she knows that she should let go of the past but acknowledges that she’s not ready. The first lines of the play:

Widow: It’s been two years since you died. It was fall, like it is now, and the leaves have already fallen. Not that much has changed. I still drink gin and tonic. I still believe happiness never really lasts, I still watch the Macy’s Thanksgiving

Day Parade, and I still love you. I've tried my best not to. I've tried so hard to forget.

Soul: I know you've tried.

Widow: Every day I wake up and think maybe today is the day I won't remember. And it never is. Every day is the same (Haidle 7).

We soon learn that today is the turning point, "How is today different from any other day?". She has a tough time letting go because everyone she has ever loved has died. Through the script, we learn that she has no other family. "I wish I had more family. Because that's all you have in the end" (12). She tells Wooer that her husband was her only family. Later she tells him that her parents are dead. I believe this is why she latches on so tightly to Soul. I propose that her parents died when she was a teenager. This is why she likes to escape into books and "pretends that I'm somebody else" (33). She needs to escape her reality of being alone. Family is our first community, when we lose that we sometimes struggle with our identity. If I no longer have my parents, am I still a daughter? Her husband dies, but she does not fit the traditional mode as a Widow. She is still young and vibrant but struggles with her identity. We learn through a memory, that her grandmother had died by the time she was eight, and her grandfather died when she was ten. Since she had no idea what death meant at this point I don't think her parents were dead before this point. Her grandfather explains to Widow that her grandma "went to sleep and simply didn't feel like waking up" (34). She tells us that she didn't understand about her grandfather dying until later when she was told she wouldn't be able to go visit him over the summer. She got pregnant young, and she and her boyfriend married, but she lost the child. After the miscarriage, she and her husband would still have sex, but we observe how it became more about baby-making than pleasure:

Soul: I kind of had a problem with premature ejaculation. I always apologized.

Body: I'm sorry.

Soul: She said:

Widow: It's fine. We'll try again next week (15-16).

They relive their last day together that included a fight the subject of which is not clear. They both regret how they handled the fight (she flipped him off but wish she had told him):

Through the ups and downs, this is a richer life than I ever imagined for myself. You know how perennial flowers pretend to die every year? I just wanted to tell you that I am a flower and you are the sun and your absence is winter and without you I'm dead (32).

Her husband sang *Killing Me Softly* while taking a shower, but he wished he had apologized. I think the choice of song is very interesting. The song that was made famous by Roberta Flack and was later covered by the Fugees is a sad song about a woman listening to a musician playing a song that she thinks tells her story. It is also worth noting that the song format is very similar to the format of the play. The song does not necessarily follow a traditional model; it starts with the chorus which is then repeated after every stanza (see Appendix B). I think the choice of song also shows their relationship. I believe that the husband chose the song to punish his wife in a comedic way; he is being ironic and is comparing his suffering to the subject in the song. Another reason why I think it's important is because I think it shows their relationship in a positive light. He sings a song in a joking manner, not angry.

She relives the memories of her husband trying to console her after the miscarriage, but she still hears the baby crying. She desperately wants to be loved. She thought she could achieve this with a child but, as she tells Wooer, “something happened with my eggs and my tubes” (30). She will not be able to have any children so she searches for her lost child.

After the fireman’s ball memory is interrupted she is brought back into the harsh reality of “nothing lasts forever” (39). We discover what prompted this flashback because it is now overlapping with the earlier first date scene. The memory hit her when she saw Wooer dressed up, when she was alone in the bathroom she was remembering the good time that they shared at the dance. She is hit again with the last day alive memory which included a fight. During the sequence we see Widow having a breakdown of sorts, being bombarded with the memories and added to this is the crying child:

Wooer: I had no idea you had a miscarriage.

Widow: It’s not your fault. How could you have known?

Body: I don’t know what you want me to say.

Widow: I don’t want you to say anything.

Wooer: I know but I’m sorry anyway.

Widow: Thanks. That’s sweet of you to say. (*The baby cries. Only the Widow hears it.*)

Soul: So make big talk.

Widow: What’s big talk?

Body: I said I was sorry.

Widow: I heard you.

Wooer: You look really beautiful. Did I already tell you that?

Widow: You did.

Soul: Ask him if he thinks each person's soul is judged for the things they do on earth. *(She begins to look around for the baby. More and more frantically.)*

Wooer: Oh. Sorry. Sometimes when I get nervous I repeat myself.

Widow: You don't have to apologize. *Where are you Sam?*

Body: I apologized. You're supposed to say it's okay.

Widow: *It's okay.*

Soul: Fine. Talk about the weather. Talk about whatever you like.

Wooer: I'm not very good at small talk.

Widow: *Come on, darling. Keep crying. Momma's gonna find you.*

Wooer: I can't stand it when people talk about sports or gossip or the weather.

Widow: *Keep crying!*

Body: You have to mean it.

Soul: I don't know. I hope not.

Wooer: I just wanted to tell you that tonight means a lot to me.

Body: Fuck this. I have to get ready for work.

Widow: *Momma's gonna find you.* (The Wooer leaves like he's leaving with the Widow on their date. The Body goes into the shower. The Soul goes into its box. The Widow stays behind looking for the crying baby. Which has stopped crying.)
Don't stop crying, baby. I want to be a momma to you. Don't you know that? If I could just find you I could be your momma. (39-40). [Italics are mine for emphasis]

She is alone in the world and there's no escape- she's trapped in this world of her own devising. She can't even be free in her dreams. Soul tells us that she dreams that her husband is lying with her, but she can't remember (24). Widow says she remembers the dreams of her flying but it's never her flying (or being free); she's always teaching others, as in Wooer's flying sequence (31).

SOUL- Soul wants absolution. He feels like he did so many terrible things while he was alive and relives them through a series of memories. When he is preparing Widow for her first date with Wooer, he suggests making "big talk" which includes:

Ask him if he thinks happiness really lasts.

Ask him if he believes in an afterlife.

Ask him if he thinks each person's soul is judged for the things they do on earth (8).

We learn that as a child, he shot a BB through a window and thinks he killed an old woman, and he feels bad about being a terrible lover to Widow and the guilt of wanting to leave her after the miscarriage. He tells Widow that he is "scared of being judged for what I did on earth" (43). I believe this is why hugs are so important to him. They symbolize love and forgiveness. We know

that he had his chance to escape but rather than ascending to final judgement as on pages 24 and 36, he stayed and talked to the pigeons because “they are very good listeners” (28). I think this is symbolic of a confession. He has to be forgiven so that he can move on. This is why it’s so important to him that Widow moves on. I planned to stage him literally pushing Widow to the door for the first date with Wooer. I think this is why he cries during Widow and Wooer’s make-out scene. The pressure is too great. If she can forgive and forget about him, then Soul will finally be free.

In the Christian sense, a soul is the immortal consciousness. It’s an essence of who we are. In the *Republic* and *Phaedrus*, Plato divides the soul or psyche into three components: Logos (rational), Thymos (spiritedness) and Eros (passion). Aristotle viewed the soul as “the principle of animal life” (McKeon, 535). The study of our soul, he believed, is essential to the understanding of ourselves, to our very nature, leading to the greater truth. He did not think that the soul and body are divided; all of the affections of the soul run concurrent with the body. It’s this intertwining of the soul and body which makes us human. I believe we see the rational and spiritedness in Soul while Body is more passionate.

BODY- wants to rest. Soul and Body are intertwined. Until Soul moves on, Body is stuck reliving his last day alive. He is brought back through the memories of Soul and Widow. It has been a burden on him. He tells Widow “this play hurts us both so much” (49). He compares this purgatory with that of Sisyphus (another hero?), which he mistakenly calls “syphilis” (47). He wants to be a hero; this is shown through the fire sequences, with the repetition of “I’m just doing my job”. We also see him identifying with another hero, Superman. When he dreams of flying he goes to the North Pole to Superman’s crystal palace from *Superman II*. But we learn through Soul’s line later that he would have left the baby in the building had he known the roof

would collapse. I think it's very telling that when he reimagines what would happen if he had found the baby, he tells the pillow, "Don't worry, baby. I have saved you. You are safe here in my arms" (47). One could easily imagine him telling this to Widow. He views himself as the hero after killing Child by saving her from her memories. It is interesting that Noah Haidle has scripted a different tone when Body has his monologue. In the stage directions, Body "talks slowly, because he's not so good with words. What are you going to do? He's just a body" (46). This could be confusing because we see him as husband during the memories of Soul and Widow.

WOOER- wants to live. He has imagined that his life can only really begin once he has someone to love (53). He thought that Widow was the person but realizes after she chooses Soul over him that she is not ready to be loved. She's not even ready for a kiss (with or without tongue). He is very family-oriented. He comes from a huge family (over twenty cousins), and they are all very close. He still lives with his mother. He knows Widow because he worked with her husband. Soul acknowledges their past working relationship with his line, "I'm glad it's you. You were always my favorite" (11). Wooer was the one who broke the news to her about her husband dying. He is trying to woo Widow, wanting to take her out to fancy dinners. He doesn't enjoy dressing up and wearing ties but he thought she'd want to go "somewhere fancy that's hard to get into" (12). When that doesn't work out they go to his favorite place and eat tacos. He takes off work early to help her go through her husband's belongings, but she's not ready for that either. On the second date, they go to someplace "really classy", the opera *Rigoletto*. We see him trying to manipulate the memories into his favor by scripting the sequence for Widow (52), but she is finally ready to move on. He is now stuck repeating the past.

CHAPTER TWO

PROCESS

Predesign Meeting

As a theater professional, I have worked in various roles in the design process- mostly as stage manager, but also as a director, assistant director, producer, and even sound designer. I have been very fortunate to have had many opportunities to observe the process with some truly remarkable mentors. The common thread that I noticed is that listening is key. In the past, I have noticed that I tend to react rather than respond, more viscerally than rationally. As I continue to work on my communication skills this is something of which I continue to be mindful. As a stage manager, I have also had the opportunity to work closely with designers. And I feel comfortable enough with my background and history of taking lighting and scenic design classes to be able to communicate with designers in those areas. I had never taken a costume design class and was far less knowledgeable (especially regarding fabric), but a lot of the concepts of design are the same. Nevertheless, I was really nervous about heading into my first predesign meeting.

The first meeting is generally just sharing my vision and concept with the collaborative team, and the designers share their initial thoughts. The design meetings are primarily a means of exchanging information in which everyone has a chance to respond. The goal is to get everyone on the same page in supporting the vision and concept. It's an informal process of questions and answers with the advisors in attendance. I discussed what drew me to the play and what I wanted to say with it. I described it as a simple linear story complicated with non-linear memories. It's like a call-and-response memory interaction. Although the play deals with death and grief, I discussed how the playwright uses the comedy. The humor keeps the play bittersweet, rather

than depressing. I told them that my goal was not to dwell too heavily on either the comedic or grief moments, rather weave together both. I also discussed the audience and what I hoped to evoke. I described themes and images that stood out to me as I continued to work on the play, how I approached the play stylistically and the rhythm. I described the rules of the world of the play. I described in detail the characters- their objectives, their function in the play and any challenges that might be associated with them. I spoke on the challenges that I perceived in the play, namely, flying, burial, marigolds, and costume changes. We discussed the meaning of the title, the definition of a vigil and how it is represented within the play. I also described the things that visually excited me about theatre, all of the new projection capabilities like eyeliner foil, as well as the old, like “Pepper’s Ghost”, an illusion technique that I had recently seen in New York City. Although I wasn’t wanting to replicate the technique (one day!), I wanted this show to also be special and unexpected. Then the designers shared their initial responses.

First year costume design graduate student, Dee Rose, was my costume designer. Although I hadn’t ever worked with her, I saw her onstage when she performed as Aunt Eller at McLeod’s Summer Theater production of *Oklahoma* and was quite impressed. She expressed the nature of grief as being universal and how laughing is used as a mechanism for grief. She described how the color purple (Widow’s dress is described in the play as being purple) can be associated with mourning. She said she was tracking the costume changes but was not concerned that they would be time-consuming. Next was first year lighting design graduate student, Lisel Kraft. Because she was new to the department, I didn’t know her very well, but I was impressed with the insight she brought to the script. She really responded to the pacing and rhythm of the play, how the memories come faster/more furiously and eventually start overlapping. She also described how memory doesn’t always move in a straight line during the grieving process. When she started

talking about projections, we were quickly shut-down by the advisors who encouraged us to respond only to the text and avoid pitfalls of designing too early. Second year doctoral student, Brooke Oehme, dramaturg, went next. I had worked closely with her on the play development of a play I directed for Big Muddy New Play Festival, *Girls with Bodies* by Kirsten Easton. Since we started SIU at the same time, we were pretty close, and I enjoyed working with her. We had spoken earlier about the script, and she discussed the writings of C.S. Lewis, particularly two works dealing specifically with the grief, *Problem of Pain* and *A Grief Observed*. Oehme spoke about how grief is sometimes different than what we expect, it can include a lot of different emotions and movement. Undergraduate Audrey Foland, scenic designer finished up the student collaborators' responses. I had worked with her previously when she designed the set for my qualifier project, *Box-Mao-Box*, and I was looking forward to working with her again. She was not really experienced as a designer, but she had proven herself as a strong and trusted student. She liked the challenge of what she saw as the "openness" of the script (not stuck with limitations of time), she saw a lot of potential for movement and was looking forward to working on the chest as a metaphor and actual scenic piece. My advisor, Segun Ojewuyi, encouraged me to track the dramatic action (see Appendix C), and a question was asked about the ending. I answered that I wanted it to be open to interpretation, but I did not want it to look like the character was going to heaven. I had previously observed on multiple occasions how my advisor inspires the team to think that this production is the most important and relevant thing ever. After my cheerleading, I left the meeting excited about exploring all of the possibilities. The next two weeks were to be used for the designers to start on their design process based on the conversations of this meeting.

During the two-week break between formal meetings, I met with Foland a few times to discuss surrealism. As a young designer, she was not very knowledgeable in the “isms” but when I reframed the style as more dream-like, she immediately responded. I encouraged her to view surrealist art and watch films to help her visually. I recommended Salvador Dali’s film *Un Chien Andalou* and *Le sang d’un poète* by Jean Cocteau. I also met with Ojewuyi who reminded me to listen and respond. He advised me that if I was unsure about something to take my time and if necessary say that I need more time to think about it. The key is to have an open mind.

Design Meetings

For the first design meeting, it was important to have a clear understanding of what I wanted while also being willing to let the process lead to even more ideas. My goal was to listen and respond while not being prescriptive. I was reminded of William Ball’s influential book, *A Sense of Direction*, when he explains that a director shouldn’t say “no” to an actor (and in this case a designer); when you say “no” it shuts down the conversation- much like in improv.

I was excited by the thought of having an all-female design team. During my first year, I worked with a female playwright on her original play, and I liked the collaborative process with her and the large cast of women. A lot of my mentors have been women, but I have found that academia is full of men. I wanted to not only be a female director but also a role-model. I know that a lot of people view me as a maternal figure, and I have struggled to find my power, but I think it is important for young students to see a variety of women in leadership roles. I know ego tended to be a problem with some of my predecessors, and I wanted this show to be a positive experience for the design team.

Dee Rose focused on the “wispieness” of memory; her images contained a lot of fire and smoke. She described fire as being transformative, destructive, and passionate much like the play. I appreciated the soft, transparent, formless lines of the images. Contrary to the playwright’s notes, I did want Soul to resemble more of an S&M feel, as long as the costume did not cover his mouth (see Appendix D). I told her that I imagined the costume to resemble the “bring out the gimp” from *Pulp Fiction*. His bondage is literal. I also told her of my hang-up with purple. I justified my dislike for the color by attributing it to an older wave of feminism but also because of my extreme dislike of the artist, SARK. I reminded Rose that I would be content with specific visual cues for costume pieces.

Audrey Foland brought in evocative images of rust. She described rust as bringing out the colors on things that have been forgotten or decayed. I really liked how the quality of rust is also representative of the fluidity of memory. Another image that I liked was that of a crooked door, and I wanted to see more of that distorted quality. We discussed possible audience configuration, and I told her that I would like to see the production in the round (see Appendix E). I was eager to see how we could approach some of the more difficult technical aspects- the roof collapsing, flying, burying, the sea of marigolds, etc. I knew we wouldn’t have the budget to fly, so we began to explore our options. I suggested the use of projections but was open to other ideas.

I was really pleased with Kraft’s ideas and the images she brought in to support them. Her inspiration images were perfect in capturing the grief and the notion of being chained to one’s past. She had a night image that she imagined for “flying” and said that should add movement. I really liked that idea and thought that the image looked “otherworldly”. Her lighting images had very strong directional light, which I thought would be wonderful in this surrealistic, dream-like world. We also discussed possibly using haze for smoke effect and could mask the noise of the

machine with fire sound effect. Unfortunately, soon after Design Meeting #4, she would drop from the program, and I would not have another lighting designer assigned to my show until five weeks before opening.

Brooke Oehme brought in information about the grieving process, and explained the labyrinth and how it used in healing as it moves towards and away from pain and grief (see Appendix F). I reminded everyone that this circular pattern is everywhere in the script and even in the shape of the marigolds. I know Foland was really inspired by this idea.

I left the meeting very excited and looking forward to seeing their images and roughs for the next meeting. I felt like there was good communication happening amongst the designers. I was concerned that Foland and Rose were still approaching things too literally, but I was keeping an open mind. Since my husband has been my primary designer on numerous shows I feel that he and I have a very similar aesthetic and vocabulary. I have often joked that we have had design meetings in bed (mostly true). I can tell him exactly what I want without worrying about stepping on his toes, and we can argue about it and work it out. Working with others instills a stronger sense of boundaries and respect. This is walking a tight-rope with inexperienced designers. Foland told me on multiple times that she found it frustrating as well because she just wanted me to be pleased. Of course, I also wanted to be pleased, but I wanted her to also grow as an artist. After all, this is educational theater.

The third design meeting did not disappoint. The designers brought in rough sketches and initial research images. Rose described Wooer as being “more earthy”. This really appealed to me. I believe Wooer is the catalyst for a lot of the changes with Widow. As someone not bogged down in her memories, he should visually represent the outsider. Rose also discussed a progression of color. We spoke about the fireman’s costume and how the safety stripes would

reflect. I thought this could be an exciting image. Kraft also spoke about a progression of color. She proposed starting primarily with monochromatic lighting and slowly introducing color. I thought this was a bold choice and fit with Widow's acceptance. I did tell her of my concern about the warm colors as I was hoping that we could reserve the orange "marigold" colors for the end and keep them special. Foland starting playing with lines. She suggested an asymmetrical bed and other furniture pieces. She was playing with this idea of tilting the space so it did not seem too comforting. She imagined a lot of peachy tones, which, again, made me a little nervous with its close relationship with orange. I must admit, I was a little disappointed that we did not have a sound designer on this show. I felt like we were missing out on another collaborator. Since lighting and sound work closely together in creating the mood of the play, I was concerned that someone would come in later and miss out on this experience. They might feel forced to adapt rather than have significant input.

I met again with Foland separately since she was now starting to visualize more specifics. I encouraged her not to get bogged down on the realism. I understand that this is tough since most students are mostly taught to justify their choices based on what makes the most sense. I remember being taught to think not only of the room on the stage but its relationship to the rooms offstage as well. We live in real spaces with walls, doors and ceilings, and most of the plays that we see fit in this category. Nonrealism forces one to use their imagination, which is not always easy to do. I liked what she brought in, and she presented some good ideas that served as the basis for the design, like the circular platform. We explored stretching and deforming some of the shapes. At the third design meeting Foland brought in some sketches and proposed a turntable idea in a thrust configuration. She moved away from a circular platform and described the shape as "being pulled in one direction". Foland described the stairs leading to the platform

as “petals” and being of various shapes and sizes. We eventually brought the distortion to the window. It started as a parallelogram, but as she continued to embrace surrealism, it became almost a butterfly-shape. I was concerned with the size of the bed. It seemed to take up a lot of space.

Rose presented roughs and fabric swatches. Widow’s dress would be asymmetrical and very flowy. I approved the line and the teal colors. Rose described Soul as being slightly “biker-boy”, I liked the leather but was concerned that it seemed like something that we would see in a club; it did not seem extraordinary but the lacing was really nice and seemed to match the trim effect on Widow’s dress. Child was “idealized” innocence with pink gingham and bows, perfect! I did share my concern that it did not seem like costumes and set were unified in a cohesive way. Oehme added fireman uniform information on Box.

Kraft presented her ideas next and really liked Foland’s curved cyc idea. She focused primarily with the look at the end of show and presented an image that moved from a maximum desaturated sky that slowly forms into the shape of marigolds at the same time as color increases to a bright field of marigolds, which I adored. Kraft then suggested the idea of the play ending with Wooer with all the lights on as he waits.

Since there was not a technical director assigned to the show, Tom Fagerholm, the faculty T.D., served in that capacity. I found him quick to say “no” without offering alternatives. For me, he became the T.D. of “no”. He also explained that since the show was scheduled first it would not have the shop support until the THEA300 students are trained. And due to scheduling, it would compete with *Children of Eden* on the mainstage. He told Foland that she must simplify. I felt like my show was lacking support, and the scheduling was no different. I found it very frustrating. The good news is that I now had a stage manager assigned, Justin Broom, and he

would be taking notes at the meetings. I was looking forward to working with him since he seemed to be very eager to learn about stage management.

At the fourth design meeting, Dee Rose presented ideas for Widow's opera dress. It was similar to the first date dress but the shape was more fitted (wrapped-style), and the color was a darker shade of green. Rose suggested that the bodice be crossed differently for the first scene, and I really liked this change as it seemed to follow Widow's state of mind. Rose proposed that by the end of the play, Widow adopt a more tailored look, which I did like, but I did not want it to look as though she was adopting a more masculine style. Widow could stay feminine even as she gained her autonomy. Her costume for Soul was moving in a better direction, but I told Rose that I hoped it would look more fitted (not skin-tight so that he would have movement, but close).

Foland presented a white model and inspiration photos. She added a second platform to provide more movement. I told her that I would like for it to flow into the main area. I did want to add extra architecture. She was trying to mask the actors entering and exiting the space, but I told her that I would like to see them; at the same time I wanted all of the egress to be safe (i.e., window escape). Rose asked about storing costumes onstage, and Foland suggested a dresser. Again, I warned about adding too much realism. It was not lost on me that I was not following my own advice. I, too, was clinging to obvious choices. I continued to fight for a trap door for Body's "burial" because I did not want his exit from the space to be too similar to Soul's. I knew that Soul was not going to be able to "fly" to heaven, so I needed to think of creative and different ways of getting them both offstage. Lisel Kraft presented next and spoke about exploring different angles of light and suggested back-lighting the cyc for silhouettes. This approach sounded very exciting to me. Oehme reported that she was working on the 101 packet.

She planned on including playwright biography, plot, and a brief explanation of surrealism. I asked her to include the Latin influences, the definition of a vigil and maybe the stages of grief. Fagerholm discussed calendar issues, and I was asked by the costume design team about when auditions would be held. This seemed to be a contentious topic amongst the faculty (see audition section).

At the final design meeting it was learned that Lisel Kraft was no longer associated with the show and left school. This was a shock for us all, and I was upset because I found her to be a strong designer and an excellent collaborator. I was not assigned another lighting designer for four months. Dee Rose presented the finalized drawings. I approved them all except for Widow's cardigan, which I found to be too similar in color to the marigolds, and it was changed to a hot pink. The set was not finalized. There were still many issues, and I think this is where Audrey Foland's inexperience started to become problematic. There were issues with the platform height with regards to sightlines. There were also issues with masking, although I still do not understand why these were no longer adjustable as had been the case with previous shows. I was still hoping for a trapdoor but continued exploring options. Brooke Oehme presented new research on marigolds; they represent passion, creativity, DEATH, and cruelty. She also informed us that marigold leaves are known to be a psychotropic drug applied to the eyelids. Each continent has their own type of marigold.

I continued to work with Foland and Fagerholm on the scenic design. Fagerholm presented two different build options and discussed the challenges associated with each. I was to select the order of importance. My preference order was: raked platform, bed pieces, trunk (nothing in stock allowed for actor to be comfortable and heard), custom window (nothing in stock was suitable for actors to climb), cyc, custom steps (we cut the number of petals) and trap. I found

this process to be very frustrating. I was being asked to make decisions not based on the design needs of the show but on the logistics of an understaffed scene shop and problems associated with the calendar. I felt like it was unfair that my show had a shortened schedule and what I perceived as a lack of support compared with past thesis productions. I tried not to compare it with last year's McLeod stage thesis, but I felt like the support should be equivalent. For example, *Jekyll & Hyde* (the last thesis on the same stage) had an extra week of rehearsals with a more experienced design team. Professionally, I know that directors have no say as far as what the production calendar dictates but professionally, I do not think I would have accepted a show with this many limitations. I felt like people were coming to me with problems that I did not create. I spoke with Ojewuyi extensively during the process and found his advice extremely helpful. In an email, he encouraged me to "In the midst of the chaos, always think first of your artistic responsibility to the production and the audience. Speak up for it! If others choose another route, you would at least have given your voice in defense of what is right. I will advise you to continue to go back to your play, reinvest in your stage and give your cast a warm, safe and creatively nurturing space to bring their individual and collective best" (Ojewuyi). This advice was much needed as I was in the midst of *Othello* preproduction, and my father was going into surgery for a leg amputation. Needless to say, it was a very stressful time.

A couple of weeks later, Foland and I were asked to make further cuts. We decided that we would not have facing, simplify the window, use stock for the added circular platform, pull the trunk (was later built), and pull a bed from stock. Unfortunately, I was asked to make important decisions without seeing any drawings or anything other than a white model. On April 29, I met with Foland and approved the design. We met again on May 5 to discuss paint treatment and, after having more time with the groundplan, I asked if the petal stairs could be moved a few feet

downstage to allow for better sightlines. Later that day, I received an email from Fagerholm telling me that the drawings had been finalized and, “Sorry for the confusion and thank you for all your input and help thus far” (Fagerholm). Needless to say, I was not happy with the answer nor the implication that I was only helpful in the process. I did not understand why what I perceived as a simple change could not be accommodated. It was my understanding that the drawings had not yet gone to the shop for the build. I felt like I had compromised on my end but did not see it reciprocated.

Every show has its issues, and this one was no different. We had problems with retention. Namely, the technical side was short graduate design students. When the design process for *Vigils* began there weren’t any scenic design or technical direction students. As of February 22, the set, lighting and costume designers mentioned above were in place. Mike Maxwell was to be my sound designer, but he let me know early into the process that he would not be able to do the design due to his thesis schedule. I had worked with him previously when I stage managed *Clybourne Park* and served as assistant director on *The Whipping Man* and was looking forward to collaborating with him. I thought we would have plenty of time to replace him, but he was not replaced until August 24, long after the collaborative process of the design meetings.

Production Meetings

When we returned from summer break we moved from design meetings to production meetings. We were fortunate that Tom Fagerholm and the scene shop were able to get a head start with some of the McLeod Summer Playhouse crew. By the first meeting it was reported that the petal stairs and window were built. Audrey Foland was still contracted with her summer work at Glimmerglass but was adding paint elevations and photos of prop research and stock to the Box account. Dee Rose worked with Foland with her contacts at the fire station. Fittings

would begin right away. Lighting designer Kraft was replaced by undergrad Andrew Beyke over the summer. Unfortunately, he was brought in after the design meeting process, but he was still able to still have an active role in the collaboration. He seemed genuinely excited to be working on the production and came to me with new and exciting ideas, and was able to communicate with me about specific choices and mood. Although Beyke was brought in late, he hoped to have a light plot by the end of the week. Brooke Oehme discussed the preshow lecture plans and ideas for the lobby display which included language of flowers, timeline of the soul, quotes about grief (I asked her to include some Joan Didion quotes) and an interactive finger labyrinth. Vincent Rhomberg reported that he had sent images to the box office for marketing, and I told him that this was something on which I wanted to be included. We had been in conversations about images a week prior to classes, and we were not on the same page. I think he was approaching it more as a ghost story, and I wanted to capture the feeling of the show. We would be scheduling press release photos as soon as possible (remember, it was still not completely cast). I was excited by the progress and anxious to get started on the show.

At the second production meeting, Foland presented a model, but it was missing the seating arrangement and masking. She would also be working on updating the ground plans. There were some scheduling issues as the platform could not load-in until lights were hung with the Genielift. I was anxious to get this loaded in as soon as possible because I was worried about the actors adjusting to the rake and specialized steps. Dee Rose had tracked the costume changes and was not worried about the quick-changes though it was still a concern for Whitworth as Wooser. Oehme was progressing with the lobby display, and I told that she should include marigolds on the floriography. I was originally hoping to reserve this image but, as my discussions with Rhomberg progressed, I thought it would be a nice tie-in. I decided rather than trying to recreate

a scene for the photo shoot, I would try to capture the mood of the play (see Appendix G). Since we still had not been unable to meet with all of the designers in the room at the same time, we set an additional meeting so that we could proceed all on the same page.

Ultimately, the sound design was assigned to undergraduate Tyler Wyvell whom I found difficult and very frustrating. He often did not reply to emails from Stage Management or me. After he was assigned the show, I had asked him to contact me after he had a chance to read the script. This never happened despite my many attempts. He did attend the designer run and we had a chance to discuss the play. Early in the rehearsal process, I started incorporating music for the dance sequences. I knew I wanted to use “A Thousand Years” by Christina Perri for Widow’s high school dance memory. I wanted something that played up her romanticized memory of the event. For Soul’s memory I asked Tanner Garren to come up with some options. I wanted something that was sexy and slow enough to couple dance. He came up with Enrique Iglesias’ “Bailando”. I thought this was a good choice because it added to the macho smoothness that he was going after during this sequence and the underlying Latin themes. We also played around with various songs for the fireman’s ball dance and settled on Missy Elliott’s “Work It”. I liked how the songs were quite different from one another, and “Work It” also played with the order (see Appendix B). Since he was brought into the process late, I feel that Wyvell did not really have much opportunity to collaborate within the process nor did he seem all that interested. He created the sound effects, but when I expressed my unhappiness with some of the fake, electronic sounding cues (for example the fire truck horn) his response was that it was an electronically-created sound. I urged him to find better sound effects, even suggesting alternatives such as the BBC sound effects library, but it seemed to fall on deaf ears.

Unfortunately, scene designer Audrey Foland experienced some personal health issues, so scenic design professor, Tatiana Vintu, came in and fixed a lot of the remaining issues. I was very pleased with the scene painting; the pinkish cloudy floor resembled the wispieness of memories. I did have to ask that the area near the petal steps be touched-up as the pink platform did not seem to melt into the purple. Also, there was a harsh pink section of platform that seemed to dominate and seemed out of place. When I spoke to Foland about the paint treatment, I told her that I wanted that section cut. I think the costumes for *Vigils* could be done in a more simplified way (especially with the Wooer's costume changes), but I was very pleased with the results. I was not totally happy with Widow's costume (weird bunching in the bra area), but due to the casting snafus, Rose did not have a lot of time to build the dresses as she had hoped. I know that some people took issue that the costumes seemed like they belonged in different shows, particularly Widow's dresses and Wooer, but I thought this reflected their different states of being. I was happy with the lights. I wished that we could have gotten a brighter effect when Widow exits the space at the end but was impressed with Beyke's work.

Auditions

Vigils was slotted for the first show in the Fall 2016 semester. There was some conflict as to when to hold auditions. Some were telling me they should be in the spring before summer break to allow the cast more time with the script and to assist with the costume design process. Others said in the fall when we returned from summer since actors most likely would not study the script and that three months is a long time for people to develop new conflicts. Ultimately, I was told that it was not a choice but that I would have to hold auditions before summer break. Since I was busy with my heightened language production, I didn't feel like I was able to really split my focus, but I knew what I was looking for in broad terms: Widow- someone who could play the

comedy equally as well as the serious (without emoting), vulnerable but gains strength. I was looking for someone who had some maturity but could have fun. Must be comfortable with the subject matter and sexual nature. Soul- someone sensitive and smart. Must understand the language and have fun with it. Physically, someone very different from Body and small enough to fit in a chest. Body- someone with a strong physical presence. Must be able to play macho but also capture the tenderness. Someone believable in syphilis monologue- comedic and tragic. Must be comfortable with sexual nature. Wooer- someone who could be both vulnerable and charming. It's important that he not be viewed as pathetic, rather an everyman. Child- a young girl who can play innocence (but not so young that she cannot memorize). Must be comfortable onstage. More than anything I wanted people I could trust.

I held auditions and was excited about the attendance. Of course, there were more women than men, so I knew that I would be casting around certain actors. There were a few women from outside of the department to audition, and I thought they would be wonderful but their schedules would not work within our timeframe. At the auditions, I asked questions of the actors that would test how well they take direction. I would ask them to repeat a section of the monologue and ask them to make an adjustment (usually I would have them to perform it again but this time in the polar opposite way from which they just performed it). I think this tests how comfortable they are with making new choices and takes them out of their habits. After all, I don't know how long they have been working on this two-minute monologue.

At callbacks there were cold-reads of the play using excerpts from Widow/Soul and Wooer/Widow scenes. I was looking to see if the actors were communicating wholly with the other actors while reading. As I started settling on a grouping, I had them read Body/Widow and Widow/Soul-Grandpa. I ultimately chose Simone Headrick as Widow, Christian Bosworth as

Soul, Tanner Garren as Body, and Colin Whitworth as Wooer. I had never worked with Simone Headrick before and had only seen her in a staged reading of Myah Lonye' Gary's play, *Penetrate*. I was impressed with her vulnerability and her comic timing. Partnered against Whitworth as Wooer and Garren as Body, casting her made sense visually. Bosworth was very good, and from working with him before I knew he was a fearless actor. I had also worked with Colin Whitworth before; he was Iago in my *Othello*, and I think he works harder than almost anyone I know. I served as Assistant Director on *The Whipping Man* when Tanner Garren played the role of Caleb DeLeon. During that process, I saw him and the director struggle with the letter-reading scene. I think he was trying to convey the physical and mental exhaustion through his voice, but the result sounded like an asthmatic episode. I saw that he deflects and hides behind his voice for characterization. I was nervous about working with him, but he did a really good job at auditions and callbacks. I planned on casting the role of Child in the fall. Costumer Dee Rose was attending rehearsals and callbacks so that she could observe the actresses auditioning for Widow since the turnaround was quick in the costume build. She took measurements at callbacks. Her son was also auditioning for a role, and I know that she was really hoping he would be cast. Unfortunately, he was not a good fit, and I found this to be very uncomfortable. Although he was not cast, she acted very professionally.

Over the summer, Simone Headrick and her husband moved out of state for work. I was not overly concerned because it was early June, and I felt we still had plenty of time. I offered the role to my second choice, Matyln Ryback. I have seen this actress onstage before, and she always does a good job, but at callbacks, I felt she emoted- a lot. I was nervous, but I thought I could work with her. After considering, she accepted the role. I knew she was hesitant about the sexual nature of the character, but I told her that I was sensitive to her concern and would work

with her. I would be willing to compromise on a few things (making accommodations with changing onstage- maybe a slip instead of just bra and panties and keeping everything covered during the doggie-style sex), but I was not going to bow on certain things, nor did I want to diminish my authority in the rehearsal space. I thought about what was important to me (staging the sex) and why (necessary comedic break). A few weeks later, she dropped from the show. By this time, I was at the Lessac Institute and was in constant contact and consulting with my advisor. My third choice was Chloe Leos. I have worked with her in the past, and she's always been one of my favorites, but I was concerned about how she would look opposite Whitworth. He reads as older and she as younger and quite small, so I didn't want to convey him as a pedophile. Leos was going through some personal issues and told me that she would be moving to Texas. So less than a month away, I decided to hold auditions for Widow on the same evening as Child. I called almost every single actress I knew and asked them to audition.

The second round of auditions was quite successful. Jasmine Chameis auditioned, and she knocked it out of the park! I had worked with her previously when I stage managed *Clybourne Park*. She exudes confidence onstage but is also very adept with vulnerability. And most of all, I had complete trust in her. Of all the actresses that attended the second round, I knew I could count on her to get to where she needed to be in the time that we had. She also had chemistry with the parts already cast. The role of Child was a little more concerning. There was only one child that auditioned so I was relieved that she did so well. Her mother works at the school and had heard about the auditions. Privately and frankly, I spoke with the mother about the content of the play and gave her a copy of the script so that she could make an informed decision. I told her that as a mother, I was in a similar situation and assured her that I would make sure this was a positive experience for Navaeh. I explained that we could sequester her backstage so that she

would not see/hear the “adult content”. I then asked Navaeh if she had a song or poem she could perform. She didn’t have anything prepared so I asked her to tell me a story. Of course I was not looking for great acting, just being comfortable onstage. We also worked on projecting since she has tiny vocal chords. She took direction well and seemed to have good rapport with Tanner Garren (I think she developed a child-crush on him!). I was hoping that she would accept the role, and she did.

Rehearsals

Since I had limited rehearsals I do feel like I rushed the process perhaps quicker than I had hoped. I also had to hold auditions during my scheduled rehearsal time to re-cast the role of Widow and Child. Fortunately, I was able to cast both roles on the first round and have table work the following evening.

In 1996 I watched Frederick Wiseman’s film, *La Comédie-Français* which chronicles the rehearsal process of the Comédie-Français. The film impacted me greatly as a young theater artist. Although as a director working in the United States, I would rarely have the luxury of an extended rehearsal schedule thus not allowing for a lot of tablework. Since then, I have read different theories arguing for and against the use of tablework. Many directors feel this is a luxury and compounds the problems of actors being too “into their heads”. I try to find a balance. Even Stanislavsky admitted that he “used to stuff the heads of the actors with all sorts of lectures about the epoch, the history, and the life of the characters in the play, as a result of which they used to go on stage with a head full to bursting and were not able to act anything” (Mitter 16). I allowed for two days of tablework. The first day was more of an introduction to each other, the script, and the process. I explained my vision for the show, and what drew me to the play. We broadly discussed themes, characters, the language and style. We also discussed guidelines for

working with a child. Since my daughter was involved with plays, I think I am sensitive to the needs not only of the child but the whole family. Many of the actors had never worked with a child before, and I wanted to create a safe atmosphere for her. Besides speaking with her mother about the content of the play and telling her we could keep the child away from the more graphic scenes and language, I also told the mother that she was welcome to attend rehearsals whenever her daughter was called.

As dramaturg, Brooke Oehme presented her research and discussed the rituals of vigils and stages of grief. The costume designer presented her renderings and discussed and, since my scenic designer was out of town, she called in and presented her white-model for the show.

Since most of the actors were cast before summer, they had plenty of time to study and learn lines (although this was not utilized effectively). We read the script aloud for meaning only. We stayed at the table for the second day and broke the script down focusing on relationships, characterization, meaning, and actions. Since most of the actors had the summer to prepare for the role, I asked the questions rather than prescribing. I used the questions to guide the actors towards supporting the vision and concept.

I encouraged the actors to memorize as quickly as possible. I find that if they are struggling with their lines, they often cannot commit to characterizations. One usually succeeds at the expense of the other. However, I have found that the students here are slow to memorize. I have observed it in the rehearsal space and the classroom. I decided to rehearse in order of the scenes, sequentially. I thought that this would be the best approach since the show could be very confusing regarding the memory-repetition sequences. The only time I broke with the order was when I started cleaning things and in working with Child. Other than Navaeh, everyone was called at every rehearsal.

I determined the specific action and movement in advance. I wanted all actions to follow the through-line and support the theme of the play. I approached the blocking with specific ideas of movement but was willing to make adjustments as needed. I allowed the actors room to explore between very specific moments and then we fine-tuned. During the blocking rehearsals I was focused primarily on the patterns of movement, physicalization, and spatial relationships.

In Rehearsals 3 and 4, we blocked scenes one and two. Rehearsal 5 was the first time working with Child, and I focused on presence and memorization. Everyone else was called later, and we reviewed scenes one and two. Rehearsal 6 was blocking scene three and review. Because of this compact rehearsal schedule I was mindful not to lose sight of the characterization. I noticed that Garren was getting increasingly more frustrated (see working with actors). Rehearsal 7 was a review of scenes one and two, and I started working on specific notes, specifically the choreography of the fireman sequences. It was tough because the action is repeated but the lines are not always the same. It was important to me that we reinforce the cyclical nature. We also broke down the syphilis monologue. Rehearsal 8 was working with Child followed by a stumble-thru for designers. Rehearsals 9-11 was cleaning and working specific scenes. I used these rehearsals as an opportunity to enrich the scene with each review. I worked on clarifying the flow of actions. I was also focusing on consistency with the characterization and the repetition. It was important to me that these were exact and not just a faint recollection. The choices/frustrations must match when the moment or memory is repeated even if it doesn't work with the current scene or situation. We worked the entire show with stop-starts and started working on the transitions. Rehearsal 12 was a stumble-thru with notes with Department Chair, Tom Kidd, and Segun Ojewuyi in attendance. I was very fortunate to have received valuable

feedback during the process. This is something that I have experienced with every show that I have directed here.

Most of Ojewuyi's notes involved clarity. He was not sure if it was a comedy of drama (I told him a very dark comedy). He was also concerned with the casual nature of the show resulting from a general lack of tension and investment. Kidd's notes were very similar, and he added specific sightline issues (especially between Widow and Wooer) and questioned the offstage acting areas (only the bathroom). He also asked a very important question, "When do I allow the audience to laugh?". I think that I answered this question during the production, but it is a question that I will continue to ask myself with every show.

During *Othello*, when Ojewuyi observed my process working with the actors, he questioned my approach in note-giving. Sometimes, I would watch the actors and not interrupt them with notes. Perhaps this is a result of my background in stage management? During *Vigils* I was mindful to stop them or side-coach them more. I found it to be very effective during the rehearsals. I was able to address issues right away, and then the actor could make the adjustment and let that inform them with other choices. As we progressed in the rehearsals I did not stop them as often, and I think this instills a level of confidence. I tried to be selective with my note-giving, not assuming to change everything all at once. If there was an issue, it could resolve itself naturally the next night. I knew that I tended to focus on the fly in the ointment. It could not be a note session just based on Garren's voices, but there were others onstage wanting feedback. I tried to make sure that I responded to everyone with some sort of note and if I found myself giving the same notes to the same actor, I talked to them privately. As with any collaboration, the actors were free to respond with their questions and concerns during notes. It should be an open

dialogue. If there is a disagreement, then I always ask, “Which choice best supports the vision?”. I was not afraid of being wrong.

Working with Actors/Strategies

I started working with Tanner Garren on his voice. Since I have a history with him, I was quick to call him out on some bad habits. In *Vigils*, since he played two characters (Body and Body as Captain O’Riley) I observed him trying out different voices for the different characters but found the words unintelligible, garbled and often too quiet. I worked with him on breaking down these barriers and relying on his own voice. Because of my training over the summer, I was still mindful of how powerful the voice can be and how he could make subtle variations rather than an “Irish” Captain O’Riley and “Nick Nolte” as Body. It took a long time to make him even aware of what he was doing and to trust himself, but I was happy with the outcome.

The syphilis monologue is most problematic moment of the show because it is scripted that he “talk slowly, because he’s not so good with words. What are you going to do? He’s just a body” (46). This does not match any other time we see him. We discussed the rationale behind the playwright’s choice. I think it is because we only see him in the past (through the memories) when he was a complete person but without his soul, he is not a complete and coherent person. As an actor, Garren tends to become too gratuitous, either pushing the accents and/or slowing his pace to a crawl. He does not give much to the other actors onstage. So I focused a lot on relationships- Body’s to Widow and even Captain O’Riley to Wooer. By Rehearsal 8 I had broken him of his habit of hiding behind the voice, and he allowed himself to be vulnerable. Nonetheless, this actor was fighting me. I did not think he fully understood the script. Nor did I think he trusted me. I think he might have felt like I was bullying or nit-picking him, but this is a very challenging role.

I worked with Garren also on specific characterization. We also see Body as Widow remembers her husband. At first, Garren was playing him as angry and without variation (his wheelhouse). I would ask him, “Why do you think Widow would hold on to these memories if you are always an asshole?”. I encouraged him to “lighten up” the razor-argument scene. He is trying to make an effort at first and then escalates. This section needs to build. We need to see all the sides of him- the good and the bad. I also worked with him on his physical contact with others. For example, Captain O’Riley is a “hugger”; we need to see that physicalization in other ways. I encouraged him to always invade other’s space.

As Widow, Jasmine Chameis was playing too melodramatic at the top of show. Jasmine is a strong actress and pretty fearless but was having a tough time connecting with the sadness of top of show. I encouraged her to think of it as a continuous action from the end of the scene. I decided to give her an entre-act of waiting for the first date. I tried to specify some of Chameis’ choices while she is “waiting”. I wanted to see Widow make an effort to preoccupy herself and distract her from Soul. I told her that I was envisioning her leaning up against the wall. Of course we did not have a wall, but I wanted to get the same effect, a helplessness in her delivery. She would pace and move in the same pattern as searching for the baby. As we explored, I decided to keep the entre-act for the show as it keeps with the idea of being stuck. It also begins the vocabulary of patterns. Having a woman create the patterns helped concretize the feminist theory. I also worked with her on her “breakdown” on page 9. It’s a tough transition from her “winning” the small talk to crying when Soul mentions “Fall”. As we pulled back the excess of melodrama, we revealed the truth.

Pacing was also something I worked on with all of the cast. For Chameis, I had to tell her that sadness does not always mean slow. Slow speech sometimes means thought of what is being said

(Obama) versus rambling (Trump). Pauses need be just as specific as the words, and I also worked with Chameis and Boswell on slowing down. “If you see it, you own it”. I am guilty of also speaking very quickly. So I know that it is a tough habit, but I reminded them that these beautiful words lose their meaning when spoken too quickly. A moment that had to be exact is the “moments accrue” section. There was almost an overlapping of dialogue in this very philosophical section. As an audience, we can’t keep up. When they would speed through their dialogue, I would yell, “What was that? I just heard a barrage of words with no meaning!”. The pacing was also integral during the breakdown section. I wanted the movement to reflect her mental status- never stopping. Timing was also important for some of the more comedic moments of the play. We worked on what I called the “Tim Burton”. I wanted a slow recognition and smile by Widow and Soul as they try to make Wooer feel more comfortable. I continued this pattern of synchronized head-turning in the scene where Body and Widow are trying to fool the other into getting out of bed first.

Working with a child is always difficult. When I was an undergraduate I directed *Wizard of Oz* at the local community theater. At that point, it was my first musical and the largest cast I had worked with at that point. It also had a LOT of children of various ages. Dorothy was a pre-teen but the younger children (my daughter, Ariel, included) served as the Munchkins. This experience taught me patience in working with children and to be realistic with the goals. I could count on the older kids to get it right and hoped that the younger kids would mirror them. Ultimately, it was successful (aside from the lice outbreak!). Everyone enjoyed seeing their child onstage, and the children had a great time. This experience also taught me that I need to rely on the parents just as much as the children and to remember the burden it can be on the whole family to have a child involved in a production. It was important to me to remember this with

Navaeh. She was at a slight disadvantage because she was the only child in the play, so I decided to use that to my advantage and focus on how special she is because she is the only one among an older cast. Due to Nevaeh's schedule and the short amount of stage-time, I only called her in once a week. However, I did not want her to think that this is not an important part. She was very excited to be in a play and was looking forward to wearing her costume. She did not have a problem with the memorization, her family helped her with that. I had to work on ways of keeping her consistent. Since she has a background in Karate, she is used to repetition. Because of her age, I would show the child what to do and then ask her to copy it. She was actually good at taking the direction but would often forget to repeat it. Since she only worked with Tanner Garren in the scene, I had them work with each other right away to build trust. At first, she was uncomfortable holding eye contact with him. We practiced a Michael Chekhov exercise with them sitting opposite each other and repeating their lines. I decided to start some physical contact since they hug, and he carries her offstage. I gave her numbers associated with loudness. I would tell her, "That was a level 3, can you make it a 6?" We also devised a method of her not rushing through the strangulation/death sequence. For a child it can seem like an eternity while you are being hugged/strangled so I had her count before she went limp. Unfortunately, this counting would become quicker and quicker. We settled on using "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" as a count and it worked much better. We also decided to have ASM, Kyle Aschbrenner, work as the Child supervisor. He had served as a stand-in for Child during rehearsals, and they seemed to have a good relationship.

Actors Onstage

The chest is integral to the play. It is a physical set piece as well as a visual metaphor for the play. I wanted the chest to be somewhat exaggerated, not just for the comfort of the actor but

also to fit the surrealistic approach. Due to the restraints of time and budget, this item was going to be pulled. When we practiced with the stock chest the problem was not with the size. The actor is small and said he was comfortable; the problem was that it muffled his voice too much. The interior of the chest had been covered in black fabric, and I think that blocked too much of the sound. It was also very hot inside. During the production meeting we discussed the possibility of adding a fake back to allow for more comfort.

The offstage space was confusing for some. There were primarily two areas where I staged action that were not on the platform. There was a space serving as “the bathroom” beyond an imaginary door and the space in front where I staged “grandfather”, Child and Wooer’s flying. This front space was utilized also as entrance into the scene. I utilized both as acting spaces. Widow and Wooer both use the bathroom space at different times and in different ways. Widow uses it as an escape to “powder her nose” when she becomes upset when the conversation turned to her husband. I told her that I did not want her to mime powdering her nose, it was just a way to regain her composure. I wanted to see that. When Wooer uses the space it is for stripping off his clothes and getting “jacked”. I wanted to see that also. I wanted these acting spaces to exist as part of the dream that does not quite make sense- suddenly JFK appears? Because it is behind a closed door the person remembering the memory is not included in this world. These acting spaces were not tied-into the set in any way, and it proved to be a contentious idea (see Chapter 3).

Because of the audience configuration, kind of a long “L”, there were issues of sightlines. Some things were easy to fix- adjusting the table and chairs at an angle so that the audience could always see at least one face and staging the razor-argument sequence on a diagonal. But others were more problematic, like Wooer waiting at the door. When he faced out most could see

him but when he faced the platform he was in view of maybe only the ends of the audience. Another moment when sightlines were an issue was during the Captain O'Riley sequence due to the stage being cluttered with actors. I encouraged them to spread out more. One time that I couldn't adjust the spacing was during the high school dance slow dance sequence. I did move them more center-stage, and they rotated a few times. I know traditionally backs to the audience is generally frowned upon, but I have always taken issue with this. I know it is a matter of taste and as an audience member it does not bother me to see a back to me for a short amount of time. I see backs all the time.

Transitions were also problematic. Because of the format of the play, each scene basically segues into the next. I wanted brief blackouts in between the scenes to indicate time passage. Scene One ends with Widow's highly emotional suicide attempt and Scene Two transitions into the next day. I wanted the blackout only long enough to cover her picking up the razor and getting into bed. The transition from Scene Two into Scene Three is Widow and Woer leaving for their opera date. This blackout is quicker, and I wanted to hear their laughter established in the blackout as they return from their date. There were also a few inner transitions, for example the masturbation, "doggy-style" and cello memories. It was important that these transitions were also in blackout so that the audience would be just as surprised by the randomness of the memories.

Due to the non-illusionistic nature of the play, I encouraged actors to "see the space". Because of the memories, this play has many different locations. In the high school dance memory, it was important to show Body as the "cool" kid in his memory, showing off in front of the other high school boys. With the Fireman's Ball, I wanted to set this memory as taking place in a large crowded ballroom with Soul standing on chest as a D.J. I wanted the staging of the Mrs. Van

Haften memory to be similar to Widow and Body's re-enactment of the razor-argument- the idea of "this is the worst thing I've ever done" repeated.

Flying was also an interesting challenge. Because flying is a recurring theme in the play and each of the characters have their own type of flying I wanted them to be unique. For Body, his flying resembled "Superman", with one arm in front. When Wooer flies he flaps his arms like a young bird learning how to fly. When Soul is captured trying to ascend to heaven, he is elevated on the chair in a pool of white, downlight with a "Hallelujah" chorus. At the end of the play I decided to tie Soul and Body back together utilizing the bedding. Body shrouded himself in the comforter while Soul wrapped the sheet around his arms and used it as angel wings which he would flap as he finally exited the stage.

Tech

I was a little discouraged by the process. There were major issues with the set, props and projection (all behind schedule) and sound (levels not consistent). I was worried that our first fire sounded like rain. I was also unhappy with the fire truck honking sound. I thought the horn sounded too electronically produced and lacked the tone needed for a fire truck. I had sent Tyler Wyvell Mike Maxwell's sound cue as a possible option for the roof collapse. I had told him that we did not have to use it but it was something that I liked. I was hoping for something that sounded like the rafters were rumbling. This was not something that could be achieved in the space since the speakers and system could not handle it. The sound effect that he came up with was too short and didn't have any of the low reverb that I was hoping for. It also seemed to bump out rather than fade. He did lengthen the effect and adjusted the fade which helped. I had sent Wyvell a lot of different song options for preshow but at first tech he used something that I thought was not quite right. It sounded too heavy and epic-sounding. I was hoping to have

something not too serious or depressing. I had told him that I wanted something like Philip Glass. I liked the repetition, but I also thought maybe some cello options would be nice. I couldn't find any cello music that didn't sound too heavy. During the tech runs we were struggling with levels. We would make level adjustments, but they did not seem to be consistent. Sometimes they would be too loud, sometimes too quiet. There were a lot of excuses as to why the sound levels could seem to be different, but I was convinced that he was not recording them properly. I have experience in sound design and since I have directed in the Moe Theater before, I felt very comfortable with how sound worked in the space. I was wanting the baby to be loud enough to cover the smoke machine. Sound is tricky in this show because the repetition is not always exactly the same each time.

Performances

On Thursday we had a good opening night performance. The audience was large and responsive. One of the biggest problems was holding for laughs. The sound levels were still proving to be problematic- the preshow/post-show music was a little low, as was the "halleluiah chorus". The high school dance music was a little loud. Afterwards, I asked the actors to be mindful of the levels and make more of an effort to project.

I think the Friday show was the best performance. The actors were over the opening night jitters and settled into their roles. We had a smaller audience, but they were actually quite responsive. Undergraduate actor, Chad Ferriel sat on the first row, and his laughs filled the house.

Saturday night was our largest audience, but I felt like it was our weakest performance. Jasmine Chameis fell back into her "melodrama" for the first five minutes. Maybe she was

relying too much on the comedy from the previous night? I was expecting a rough night since the A/C was out and House Manager Greg Aldrich was heckled by a drunk audience member during his preshow announcement.

Sunday matinee shows are generally an older crowd, and I was not sure how they would respond to the subject matter. It was a smaller audience and not as vocal, but they seemed engaged. I felt like it was a pretty good performance. There were some technical difficulties (projector was late for the first fire sequence and then skipped ahead to the sky). Ojewuyi said something to me before the show started about not focusing on the mistakes but watching and enjoying the show. I recognized that I needed to decompartmentalize. My job as the director was over.

CHAPTER THREE

POST-PRODUCTION: EVALUATION

This was a difficult process for me for various reasons. In the spring semester, I was working on two shows at the same time. I was deep into rehearsals for my Heightened Language production of *Othello* when I also started working on *Vigils*. There was also the issue of retention. I lost some quality designers and actors. Over the summer, I had casting difficulties with *Widow*. Then, my mother went into the hospital. By the time classes started back up in the fall, I was still short designers, was scheduled to hold a second round of auditions, and was preoccupied with my mother's health.

I was concerned when I discovered that I would be directing *Othello* late in the semester and that I would be also be directing the first show of the 2016-17 season. This meant that during rehearsals for *Othello* I would also be prepping for design meetings and starting my process for *Vigils*. I was grateful that Segun Ojewuyi wanted me to focus on *Othello* during the spring; after all, it was my first time directing Shakespeare, but I was also mindful that *Vigils* would have a tight schedule so advance work was necessary.

I was excited about my simplified approach to Shakespeare, concentrating on the language. I needed to cut the play for time, and this helped strip away all the artifices and freed me to focus on the storytelling. It was exciting to approach the show as peeling back and only including what was necessary to the story. I found that cutting the character Bianca (whom I love) was necessary for this retelling. I staged it using minimal costume pieces that would be swapped out for the double-casting, and two benches that would be arranged differently for the different locales, for example stacked on top of each other for the Duke's desk and standing up to form a wall for

Othello to hide behind. I was ultimately pleased with my heightened language production, but I couldn't help but feel like I was split between two shows. I was excited by the challenge of working on two completely different shows and was aware that professionally this may be something that I will encounter again, but for this to happen on my first attempt directing Shakespeare and as my thesis, I did find it to be overwhelming.

Another element that I am not confident about is the collaboration. This was problematic for me on numerous levels. Mainly, most of my designers left. I was without a lighting and sound designer for most of the process. The designers that were brought in were undergraduates. Although most of my designers were at different levels of their education, I don't think that any of them had a lot of experience as designers. I understand that each production in academic theatre will always be comprised of designers at differing levels of experience. Refining my collaborative skills was something that I wanted to focus on with this show since we are really not afforded this practice with our other projects (Qualifier and Heightened Language). I think it would have been nice to have more experienced graduate designers associated with my show. I do not think the collaboration was as strong as it could have been because, for a while, Dee Rose and Audrey Foland were all I had.

It was also one of the first times that I was able to work with a dramaturg. When we previously worked together on Kirsten Easton's *Girls with Bodies*, Brooke Oehme was mostly used for play development and worked closely with the playwright. I know that the playwrights have found her work to be very beneficial to them for their process, but I was not sure how to best work with her. I had been trained to do a lot of the research work for myself and have worked professionally as a dramaturg. I had observed her process with other directors who relied on her as a sort of assistant director. Oehme also assisted with *Othello*. She acted as springboard,

stage manager and even as stand-in. For *Vigils*, I wanted to utilize her mainly for supporting the theory. Since she is a friend, I knew I could count on her to share her opinion if something seemed way off. I spoke with Oehme about surrealism and the different themes that were sticking out to me (magic realism and stages of grief). I know that she was very influential on the scenic design. Early on, Audrey Foland latched on to the idea of the labyrinth, and this was reflected in the circular shapes onstage. Oehme created the actor's packet and the 101 packet. She attended several rehearsals and even took notes during design meetings when the stage managers were not present. Unfortunately, due to illness, we did not have a pre-show lecture. I enjoyed the collaboration with the dramaturg, though I am not sure I utilized her effectively.

Everything halted at the end of July when my mother went into the hospital. On July 25 she was placed in ICU with sepsis, and we were not sure that she would survive. She was on life-support, and I was a nervous wreck. I served as her primary health care advocate and was staying at nearby hotels as I live an hour away from the hospital. I also had to care for my father (who had recently had a leg amputation) and serve as the go-between with the doctors and friends/family. I had plenty of time to work on the show, but I had a difficult time concentrating on anything. As such, I was not able to put the necessary time in on the show prep that I was hoping to accomplish before classes started back up in August.

By the time classes started, it actually was a sort of relief to get my mind focused on something other than my parents. My mother's health improved slightly, but she was constantly being moved from the critical care to long-term acute care, and it was still a pretty hectic. Her changing status was non-stop ever since the first day of class. I was lucky we were able to start rehearsals right away, but I would still only have fourteen rehearsals before tech. It was important to me to spend as much time as I could with my mother so I avoided rehearsals on the

weekends. I felt like I was rushing through my process, but it didn't seem insurmountable. After all, it was a similar situation with *Othello*. I had only two and one-half weeks for that production. Looking back, I know that I was not always fully engaged during the process.

However, this cast was mostly younger and more inexperienced, which required more work with specific acting notes. I feel like this was one of my biggest mistakes on the show. I rushed the process, front-loading it with blocking, and not spending enough time with the characterization and story-telling. I should have addressed this quicker. I spent a lot of time with Tanner Garren in the earlier rehearsals, mostly trying to get us both on the same page. While I appreciate that Garren and Boswell did use part of their summer break getting off book, I felt like their interpretations were radically different from mine, and I had to break a few habits that they had developed. Christian Boswell is a smart actor, but there were a lot of times when as an actor, he did not know what he was doing. This resulted in a type of casualness in his performance. Garren always seemed to be experimenting, which can be good early in the process, but it developed into a problem with consistency. Perhaps I allowed Chameis too much leeway since she had a lot less time with the script. I ultimately apologized to the cast for cheating them out of their process. Fortunately, we had a little bit of time that we eked out of the tech schedule.

During my feedback session with Segun Ojewuyi he asked me how I felt about the progress, and I told him that I felt like we were decent. I still feel like we accomplished a lot for the amount of time we had, but we were not as far as we needed to be with our opening date looming. It was a tough response session because I felt like we also had different understandings of the script. At the meeting, I couldn't definitively answer his question of whether the play is a serious drama or a comedy. I feel like this play straddles both, but I think this uneasiness with the answer also added to muddiness of the production. I wanted the comedy to serve as a sort of

respite in the play, and I was hoping it would make the tragic moments even more poignant. Perhaps I may have been playing up the comedy too much. At Ojewuyi's suggestion, I toned the comedy down a bit. I also moved the first fire sequence into the waiting entre-act before the dialogue so the patterns would be established but it would not be as distracting.

In the future, I will definitely focus more time earlier in the process with characterization. I think more effective table work and improv exercises would have expedited this process. I would also insist that actors get off book sooner so that the connections and relationships would be more solid. Although the design process was very frustrating at times (see Chapter 2), I do think it encouraged me to think more creatively with problem-solving. Jacob Juntunen's playwriting class taught me that spectacle does not always have to be big. Sometimes the more simple is the most effective. I had wanted this show to be bigger but, ultimately, I do not think the story needed it to be. Since attending graduate school, a lesson that I am repeatedly learning is that audience rarely remember the words of the play and even the images will recede from memory, but what stays with them is the emotional response. How they felt is what is important. I used to have a very selfish understanding about theater. I knew most people would not like what I was doing (I heard so many complaints about the clock bell chimes when I directed *The Bald Soprano*), and I didn't care. I did not feel I was directing it for them, but I now realize the importance of sharing the story.

I also feel like I have a deeper appreciation of the visual aspect of storytelling. It is no surprise that I am a fan of absurdism. I find that particular "ism" to be what excites me most as a theater artist. I knew that its appeal to me was more than just being anti-realism. I loved how it could be full of hope and despair, comic as well as tragic. I thought it better captured the nuances of real life. I also fell in love with the language, perhaps focusing on the words more as poetry than

dialogue. I did not think that plot was as important as Aristotle's other elements. I also felt like it was unfair to try to approach an absurdist work in the same manner as a realistic piece. I thought this approach lessened its importance somehow. I have been fortunate to work on several types of theater here and somehow most of them were not realistic. However, I found that my analysis in the past was based as if they were all a type of realism, a type of truth. I have come to realize that style does not correlate with understanding. Everything must be clear so it can be communicated to the audience. The thing about realism, for me, was that it was so boring. I felt that ideas were spoon-fed to me. I wanted to be challenged and exhilarated. Namely, I wanted to feel. Throughout my studies here, I have been challenged to look at everything differently. There is no reason why a realistic play cannot move me nor can an absurdist play just be. I now know that with every work, an inner truth is there. The analysis helps you uncover it.

Although I faced many challenges with my collaborative process, I do not think the production suffered in any way. Ultimately, the show did not hinge on whether or not the petal stairs should have been moved two feet downstage. Many people that I spoke with following the performances were very moved by the play. I felt like I had succeeded. I made them FEEL. Shortly after closing I was forwarded an email from an assistant professor of Classics and Art History who said, "I saw *Vigils* this last Sunday in the Moe, by the way, and laughed/cried my eyes out. A lovely piece: powerful performances, pitch-perfect costumes and stage, and intimate as only the Moe can be. So glad I saw it. Raved about it to my Greek Mythology class afterward -- I had just lectured on the Greek notion of the soul and afterlife in the lecture before, so it was perfectly timed -- and gently ordered all 250 of them to attend every production you folks offer" (Allen).

Actors are always a tricky bunch. I don't expect to ever have a perfect experience with an actor. Everyone, just as in real life, presents their own unique challenges. I think the thing that I learned the most in working with the *Vigils* cast, is that you have to be willing to adapt. One type of note for one actor is not necessarily suited for another. The best lesson that I have learned with dealing with actors is to give them too much. You can allow them freedom to play, but a director must set the ground rules. I will remember that I am not their friend in the rehearsal space though I can be friendly. I always felt that actors were doing me a favor (namely, committing to a show with a tight schedule) by being in my show and that I should accommodate them. I think I was too accommodating-not insisting that actors be-off book, listening to excuses as to why they were not focused, etc. Because of the narrow time frame, I should have been more stringent. I had observed Ojewuyi's rehearsal process and was amazed by how quickly he was able to get results, but I shied away from what could be perceived as an aggressive tone due to my concerns about being a woman. I did not want to come across as being too "bitchy". It is ironic that this fear has never impeded me from exerting my authority as a stage manager.

I think that I accomplished most of my goals. The pre-production work based on Katie Mitchell's book was most useful in preparing me for the decisions that I faced. Everything was based firmly from the text. I feel more confident as a communicator. I believe this is a direct result of being the expert of my production. Inside and out of the rehearsal room, I have learned that every word can be powerful. Perhaps because of my upbringing, or perhaps just being afraid of exerting my authority, I have a history of using very passive language. I think this aided me in certain situations (speaking with Foland) but also hindered me in others (speaking with Ojewuyi). I know that I will not be able to exert the same level of authority as Segun Ojewuyi, but I must not diminish my impact either. I must fight for what I feel strongly about and be

willing to negotiate on other issues. Unfortunately, I was not able to fully implement all that I learned with the Lessac training. I did not work extensively with vocalizations. I think I need more time with the technique to fully appreciate the holistic and kinesthetic approach. The physicalization was more Artaud than Lessac, but I did implement the NRGs. I will continue to apply many aspects of Artaud's theory, namely the idea that the movement conveys as much as the language.

Overall, I am happy with the work that I did. I feel so fortunate to have done a show that I loved, and I think that others really enjoyed it as well. My cast seemed to enjoy the process. At first I was concerned about Tanner Garren, but he later told me that this was his best experience thus far at SIU. Colin Whitworth enjoyed the play so much that he was hoping it would be extended to run for two weeks. Navaeh decided that theater is something that she'd like to pursue. It was not a perfect production, and I think that I would always find faults in a show regardless of how much time it has. Before the final production, when I was speaking to Ojewuyi and telling him that as I watch I only notice the mistakes, he advised me to look at it with fresh eyes, to enjoy the work and participate in the new discoveries. Although this is easier said than done, it is an important life lesson.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

FACTS AND QUESTIONS

Facts

Scenic-Bedroom on 2nd floor (7)

Scenic- View of an ocean (7)

Scenic- Portrait of husband (7)

Box for the Soul (7)

Scenic- Bathroom- partial view (7)

Scenic- Window (7)

Costume- Widow dressed up, purple dress, heels that click (7)

Scenic- Wood floor (7)

Widow drinks gin and tonic (7)

Scenic- Overstuffed chair (7)

Costume- Soul is in black leather “not to S&M” doesn’t have eyes (7)

Husband dies 2 years ago in the Fall (7)

It is now Fall (7)

Widow believes “happiness never really lasts” (7)

Widow watches Macy’s Thanksgiving Parade (7)

Widow says she tries to forget husband (7)

Widow believes every day is the same (7)

TODAY IS DIFFERENT- New dress/date (8)

Widow is nervous about date (8)

Only Soul hears baby (8)

Body is a fireman (8)

Wooer is nervous about date- breath spray/hair-pat/odor check (8)

Widow doesn't want Wooer to think she's pathetic (8)

Widow is reminded of husband's death when she sees the leaves fall (9)

Widow- "...it seems like only yesterday...he held me in his arms...we were happy" (9)

Widow doesn't go to the movies anymore, that was something she enjoyed with husband, smell of popcorn reminds her of him (9)

Widow doesn't know who's a celebrity anymore (9)

Widow blushes after Wooer's kiss on cheek (10)

Wooer can see Soul (10)

Wooer brings a dozen long-stemmed roses (10)

Wooer's cousin in a florist (10)

Chez Genevieve for first date and where Widow was engaged (11)

Soul tries to put Widow and Wooer at ease (11)

Scenic- Soul sleeps in box (11)

Costume- Widow keeps key for lock around her neck (11)

Wooer tries to impress Widow- someplace fancy/roses "something fancy and exclusive" (12)

Wooer has simple tastes- tacos at Ernest y Ernesto (12)

Ernestos is a dive taco shack by the river (12)

Older Enersto had his arm bitten off by a shark (12)

The first girl Wooer kissed was is cousin when he was 8y.o. (12)

Wooer has a large family- mid to high 20's for cousins (12)

Widow's husband was her only family (12)

Widow had miscarriage- she hears the baby crying sometimes (13)

Wooer doesn't like small talk (13)

Widow doesn't speak Spanish/ Wooer speaks a little (14)

Soul and Body relive and repeat last moment alive (14)

Husband/Body's last thoughts: hero-wife-baby-good vs. evil- baby-Jupiter (14-15)

Body masturbates (15)

Widow likes doggy-style but husband likes to look in her eyes otherwise fantasizes about someone else (15)

Body tells Widow that he's thinking about baseball during sex (15)

Husband ejaculates prematurely (15)

Widow steals covers when sleeping (16)

Husband dreams of flying (16)

The worst thing husband did was shoot Mrs. Van Haften (17)

Widow met husband at HS Valentine's Day dance (17)

Widow cannot see without glasses (17)

Husband was handsome (17)

Widow is not a good dancer (17)

They have sex the first night they met in the backseat of her car and she became pregnant and they married (18)

Widow had miscarriage and husband wanted to leave her but didn't because she was too depressed (18)

Soul remembers Thanksgiving day dinner, it's "happiness" (18)

Widow's grandmother taught her how to make gravy without lumps (18)

Body masturbates (18)

Soul wants to remember only the happy times (19)

Memory of earlier that night repeats (19)

Soul believes Wooer to be sincere (20)

Soul hears hope in Widow's voice for the first time (20)

Soul believes that if Widow is happy she can move on and forget him (20)

Widow is happy for "minutes at a time" and the memory of her husband is starting to fade (21)

Widow refers to Soul as "it" (22,23, 48)

Widow catches Soul as it was ascending to heaven (24)

Widow hasn't slept well since her husband died (24)

Widow dreams that her husband is lying in bed with her but cannot remember her dreams (24)

Soul escapes through the widow using sheets tied together with rope "the worst thing I've ever done" (24)

Soul uses sound of ocean to navigate himself to the window (24)

Widow tries to commit suicide using her husband's razor (26)

Scenic- The roses from the night before are already dead (26)

Wooer tells Widow that people from fire dept., neighbors, and church care about her (26)

Widow's parents are dead (26)

One of Wooer's cousins hung himself after scoring poorly on SAT (26)

As a child, Widow spent summers with her grandparents (26)

Marigolds were her grandfather's favorite flower (26)

Marigolds are annuals- germinates, flowers, sets seed and dies within a year, part of daisy family, dried petals were used for coloring butter (27)

Husband would bring a marigold to make-up after a fight (27)

Marigold was husband's nickname for Widow (27)

Soul didn't escape to heaven, he was chatting with pigeons (28)

Captain: Right to express his opinion in this country but no hugging (28)

Captain's Uncle Jim fell out of a five-story window and was paralyzed (28)

Widow was going to name the baby "Sam" after Mark Twain (30)

Widow had fertility issues (30)

Widow hasn't dreamed since her husband died (31)

Widow dreamed of teaching others to fly but she never flew (31)

Wooer doesn't know where to fly, Widow tells him "Boca Raton" (31)

Widow and her husband had a fight the morning that he died (31)

"Fuck this. I have to get ready for work" are the last words that her husband said to Widow (32)

Widow has a speech that she wished she had told him where she compares herself to a flower to her husband's sun (32)

Widow and husband were high school sweethearts (32)

As a HS student, husband would watch Widow reading in the library- she reads to pretend she is someone else (33)

Husband joins fire dept instead of college to support new family (34)

Widow's memory of her grandfather is from when she was 8y.o. (34)

Widow's grandfather: "Flowers grow and die the same time every year and that makes them easier to love than people (34)

Widow's grandmother was already dead by the time she was 8 (34)

Marigolds die in the fall- Widow: "Wouldn't it be nice if people died in the fall too?" (35)

Widow's grandfather died when she was 10 (35)

Wooer helps Widow pack up her husband's belongings but she's not ready to part with them, they still carry his scent (37)

Fireman's Ball was held at the downtown Holiday Inn (39)

Widow wants to be a mother (40)

Wooer is more confident on 2nd date- to the opera (40)

2nd date is *Rigoletto* (40)

Widow is also more confident: "I have a much better time than I expected" (40)

Widow and Wooer make-out/no more blushing (42)

Wooer is less experienced, no one has ever told him "slipping into something more comfortable" (42)

Wooer calls Widow "Marigold" (43)

Soul is scared of being judged for what he did on earth (43)

Soul doesn't consider himself a "hero", he admits that he would have left the baby had he known the roof would collapse (43)

Soul says he's done so many "terrible things"- lover, shooting Mrs. Van Haften, wanting to leave her after miscarriage (43)

Widow admits to Soul that he was a terrible lover and she knew he wanted to leave but she couldn't stand to be alone (43)

Widow is not nervous to have sex with Wooer, she's excited (44)

Soul gives Widow a hug "to give her away" (44)

Widow doesn't like clean breaks- she slowly removes Band-Aids and eases into ocean (44)

Soul admits to the awkwardness of Wooer and Widow having sex in the next room (44)

Wooer lives with his mom- and is mocked by Soul (45)

Wooer demands that Widow choose between he and Soul- she chooses Soul (45)

Wooer admits that he is hurt and does not allow Widow to console him (45)

Widow admits that she is not ready to let Soul go, so he tries another escape (46)

Body compares his situation with Sisphus/Syphillis “this play is my boulder” (46)

Body imagines finding the baby, raising it, plays catch and then murders it to save it from having memories (48)

Widow drags Soul back onstage, victorious, takes a pill (48)

Body tells Widow that this play hurts all of them (49)

Widow forces a happy memory and Body complies (49)

Widow says she’s now ready to forget (50)

Soul can now see and laughs as he flies to heaven where there is no memories, pain, sickness, sadness, hunger, disease, hatred or fear (51)

Body sings as he “goes under the earth” where he can finally rest and push up marigolds (51)

Widow can now dream- she flies (52)

Widow has another cousin, an event planner (52)

Wooer doesn’t feel like he has enough memories (53)

Widow tells Wooer that she has found her way out (53)

Wooer is now stuck in the cycle, waiting for this date his whole life, waiting for someone to love (53)

Questions

What kind of house is this? why is the bedroom on 2nd floor? (7)

What kind of portrait of husband? (7)

Which ocean? (7)

Why is the Widow waiting? For whom? (7)

Why purple dress? (7)

Why gin and tonic? (7)

Why is Soul in black leather? (7)

Why doesn’t Soul have eyes? (7)

Why Fall (7)

Why does Widow believe “happiness never lasts”? (7)

Why does she watch Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade? Nostalgia? What connection? (7)

How does Widow try to forget husband? (7)

Why does Soul suggest “big talk” are these the answers he is seeking? (8)

Why is Soul so worried about his actions on earth? (8)

Why doesn’t Widow hear baby? (8)

What is Body doing (8)

Why does the baby stop crying? (8)

What kind of flowers? (8)

Why is Wooer unaccustomed to wearing a suit? (8)

Did Widow watch the game last night? (8)

Is she referring to football- defense/offense? (9)

Is Widow interested in sports? (9)

Why does Soul encourage her to date? (9-10)

Does Wooer have a big family? Are they close? (10)

Is Wooer an inexperienced dater? (10)

Was Wooer really Soul’s favorite? (11)

Why does Widow treat Soul like a child- kiss on the forehead? (11)

Which river? (12)

Can you swim from Ecuador on a surfboard? (12)

Widow’s family- was husband the only family she had left? What happened to the others? (12)

What is Wooer saying in Spanish? (14)

Why is husband’s last thoughts about good vs. evil, heaven vs. hell, Jupiter? (14-15)

Why Jupiter? (15)

Who does Body fantasize about? (15)

Why does husband dream of flying to North Pole/Superman II, Crystal Palace? (16)

Does Widow have a job? Friends? (16)

Why does Body sing “Killing Me Softly”? (16)

Costume- Why does Widow wear a poodle skirt at HS dance? (17)

How old were they when they married? HS dance? 17 y.o? (17)

Is this a joke- crab to shell, “wouldn’t you like to know?” (18)

Why did Widow’s grandmother teach her to cook? (18)

What are the different levels of “dirtier” magazines? (19)

Why does Body play cello, when Soul doesn’t remember playing? (19)

Does Soul sleep? (22)

Do forest fires really move faster uphill than down? Why? (22)

Are 2500 left-handers really killed annually from using right-hand products? (22)

Is it true that if you counted every day, it would take 31,688 years to reach a trillion? (22)

Why does Widow turn on hot water to slice her wrist? (25)

Why are the roses already dead? (26)

Analogy between people are flowers- a metaphor? (27)

What is Widow’s name? Nothing like “Marigold” (27)

Why did Wooer’s friends call him Pope Pius II? (27)

Who is Pope Pious II? (27)

Why doesn’t Soul go to heaven when he escapes, instead speaking to pigeons? (28)

Does this place take place in America? Democracy? Capt. Discusses freedoms? (28)

Lawsuits from hugging? (29)

Which dance story is the truth? (32)

Was Widow really a ballerina? (33)

Why does Widow need to pretend she’s someone else? (33)

Is Widow changing the events? Morning of fight? (35)

Why figs? (36)

What is “electric slide” dance? (39)

Is Widow having a breakdown? (39)

What does tacky alligator shoes look like? (40)

Why Rigoletto? Storyline? (40)

Petting? (42)

Famous stripping song? (42)

What terrible things does Soul refer to? (43)

Why does Soul cry? (44)

“Shake and bake”? Runningback/football? (46)

Body lacks agency? “Maybe next time they remember the fire...” (48)

Why does Body drag child offstage? (48)

What kind of pill does Widow take? (48)

Does Widow prompt the memories? (49)

The meaning of Widow talking in her sleep? “You think you’re hot? I’m sitting here sweating” (50)

What is Body’s quote from: “I hope for nothing. I fear for nothing I am free” and “Between grief or nothing I will take grief”? (51)

Why a sea of marigolds? (53)

(Italics indicate when a question has been answered)

APPENDIX B

SONGS

Killing Me Softly

Strumming my pain with his fingers
Singing my life with his words
Killing me softly with his song
Killing me softly with his song
Telling my whole life with his words
Killing me softly with his song

I heard he sang a good song, I heard he had
a style
And so I came to see him to listen for a
while
And there he was this young boy, a stranger
to my eyes

Strumming my pain with his fingers
Singing my life with his words
Killing me softly with his song
Killing me softly with his song
Telling my whole life with his words
Killing me softly with his song

I felt all flushed with fever, embarrassed by
the crowd
I felt he found my letters and read each one
out loud
I prayed that he would finish but he just kept
right on
Strumming my pain with his fingers

Singing my life with his words
Killing me softly with his song
Killing me softly with his song
Telling my whole life with his words
Killing me softly with his song

He sang as if he knew me in all my dark
despair
And then he looked right through me as if I
wasn't there
But he just came to singing, singing clear
and strong

Strumming my pain with his fingers
Singing my life with his words
Killing me softly with his song
Killing me softly with his song
Telling my whole life with his words
Killing me softly with his song

Written by Charles Fox and Norman
Gimbel. Sony/ATV Music Publishing.
Warner/Chappell Music.

https://play.google.com/music/preview/Tcd2auz4t3sqv5tm35f4pfiatpa?lyrics=1&utm_source=google&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=lyrics&pcampaignid=kp-lyrics

Work It

DJ, please pick up your phone
I'm on the request line

This is a Missy Elliott one-time exclusive
Come on

Is it worth it, let me work it
I put my thing down, flip it and reverse it
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
If you got a big, let me search it
And find out how hard I gotta work ya
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
(Come on)

I'd like to get to know ya so I could show ya
Put the pussy on ya like I told ya
Gimme all your numbers so I could phone
ya
Your girl actin' stank then call me over
Not on the bed, lay me on your sofa
Phone before you come, I need to shave my
chocha
You do or you don't or you will or won't ya
Go downtown and eat it like a vulture
See my hips and my tips, don't ya
See my ass and my lips, don't ya
Lost a few pounds and my whips for ya
This the kinda beat that go ra-ta-ta
Ra-ta-ta-ta-ta-ta-ta-ta-ta-ta-ta
Sex me so good I say blah-blah-blah
Work it, I need a glass of water
Boy, oh, boy, it's good to know ya

Is it worth it, let me work it
I put my thing down, flip it and reverse it
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
If you got a big, let me search it

And find out how hard I gotta work ya
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
(Come on)

If you a fly gal get your nails done
Get a pedicure, get your hair did
Boy, lift it up, let's make a toast-a
Let's get drunk, that's gon' bring us closer
Don't I look like a Halle Berry poster
See the Belvedere playin' tricks on ya
Girlfriend want to be like me, never
You won't find a bitch that's even better
I make you hot as Las Vegas weather
Listen up close while I take it backwards
Sdrawkcab ti ekat ot ekil yssiM yaw eht
hctaw
I'm not a prostitute, but I could give you
what you want
I love your braids and your mouth full of
floss
Love the way my ass go bum-bum-bum-
bum
Keep your eyes on my bum-bum-bum-bum-
bum
And think you can handle this badonkadonk-
donk
Take my thong off and my ass go boom
Cut the lights off so you see what I could do

Is it worth it, let me work it
I put my thing down, flip it and reverse it
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
If you got a big, let me search it
And find out how hard I gotta work ya
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
(Come on)

Boys, boys, all type of boys
Black, white, Puerto Rican, Chinese boys
Why-thai, -thai-o-toy-o-thai-thai
Rock-thai, -thai-o-toy-o-thai-thai
Girls, girls, get that cash
If it's 9 to 5 or shakin' your ass
Ain't no shame, ladies do your thang
Just make sure you ahead of the game
Just 'cause I got a lot of fame supa
Prince couldn't get me change my name
papa
Kunta Kinte a slave again, no sir
Picture black sayin', "Oh, yes a master"
Picture Lil' Kim dating a pastor
Minnie Me and Big Ren can out last ya
Who is the best, I don't have to ask ya
When I come out you won't even matter
Why you act dumb like "Uh, duh"
So you act dumb like "Uh, duh"
As the drummer boy go ba-rom-pop-pom-
pom
Give you some-some-some of this Cinnabun

Is it worth it, let me work it
I put my thing down, flip it and reverse it
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
If you got a big, let me search it
And find out how hard I gotta work ya
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
Ti esrever dna ti pilf nwod gniht ym tup I
(Come on)

To my fellas
I like the way you work that
To my ladies
You sure know how to work that

Written by Alonzo Jackson and Kenneth
Edward Pratt. BMG Rights, Warner
Chappell Music

https://play.google.com/music/preview/Tzg5fkxkxip4k5vw5lfpayaxqp7e?lyrics=1&utm_source=google&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=lyrics&pcampaignid=kp-lyrics

APPENDIX C

TRACKING THE DRAMATIC ACTION

Timeline

Widow Grandpa Memory
Soul Mrs. Van Haftan Memory
Soul practicing cello
High School Dance/backseat of car
Marriage
Soul becomes fireman
Thanksgiving
Masturbating
Miscarriage
Trying for another baby
Masturbating
Trying for another baby
Fireman's Ball
Morning of fight
Fire
Widow catches soul
2 years pass
Widow/Wooper date
Soul escapes/Widow suicide
Return of Soul
Wooper declares love for Widow
Wooper helps Widow purge clothing
Wooper and Widow opera date
Ultimatum/Wooper leaves
Relives memory of final day
Widow release Soul and Body
Widow dreams of flying
Widow sees Marigolds
Wooper makes-up/Widow leaves through sea of marigolds
Wooper repeats memory

Memory Chronology

Pg 7-14	Present
Pg 8	Fire (Body memory- Widow Present)
14-15	Fire (Soul/Body Memory)
15	Masturbating (Body/Soul Memory)
15	Past (Soul/Body Memory) “Thinking about”
15-16	Past (Soul/Body Memory) Sex-Sleep-Dream/Flying/Work
17	Past (Soul/Body Memory) Mrs. Van Haftan
17-18	Past (Soul/Body Memory) High School Dance- Thanksgiving Dinner
18	Masturbating (Body/Soul Memory)
19	Past (Body/Soul Memory) Cello
19-21	Past (Soul) Eavesdropper
21	Fire (Soul/Body Memory)
21-23	Present
23-24	Fire (Soul/Body Memory) –Soul catcher-Fire
24-25	Present
26- 30	Present
30	Baby crying (Widow)
30-31	Miscarriage- Bed
31	Present
31-32	Morning of death
32-34	High School Dance (Widow)- Miscarriage
34-35	Grandfather
35-36	Morning of death
36	News of Death-Trapping Soul
37	Present (Memory 1)
37	Purging
38-39	Fireman’s Ball
39	Present (Memory 1)
39	Baby (Widow)
40	Morning of Death- Miscarriage
40-41	Present (Rigoletto)
42-46	Present
46-48	Body Sisyphus- Day of death- Murdering Imaginary Child
48-49	Present
49-50	Memory- morning of death
50-53	Present “This was a mistake”
53	Memory 1 (Woer)

APPENDIX D
COSTUME DESIGN

Renderings and fittings

Widow



1st date dress



Opera date

Widow



P.42 "Something a little more comfortable"



End of Show

Body



Fire Sequence



H.S. Dance Memory /
Fireman's Ball

Woover



First date



Opera Date



Pg. 36 "Something
happened"

Soul



Top of Show



Grandfather

Child



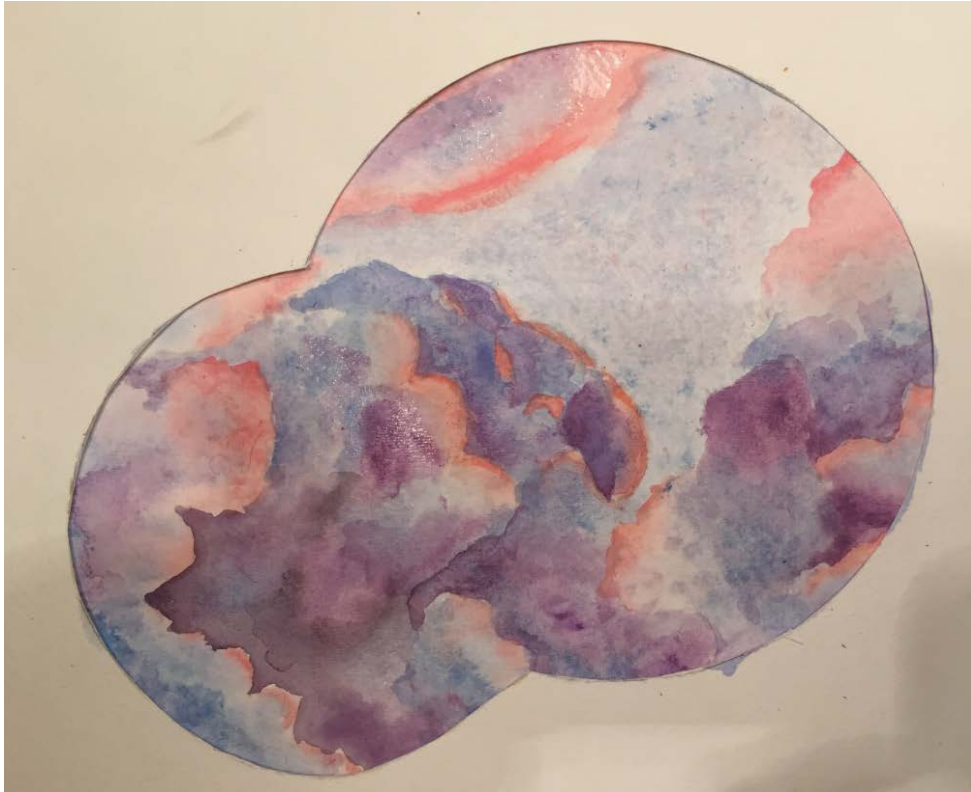
The images in appendix D are used with permission by Dee Rose.

APPENDIX E

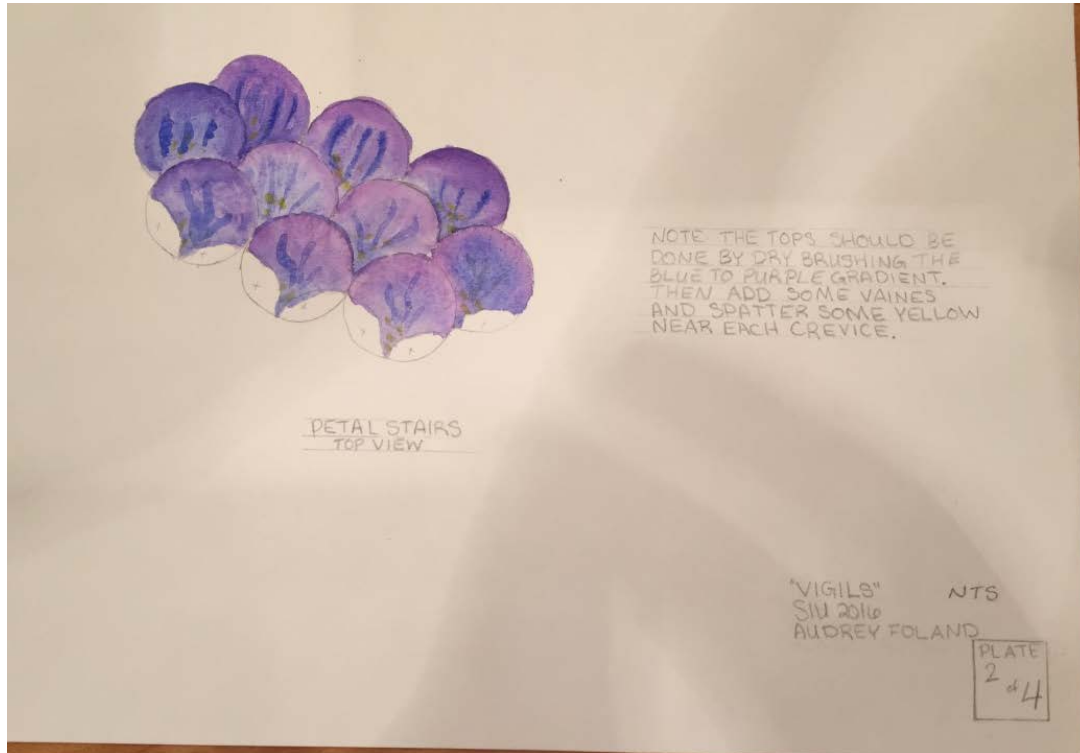
SCENIC DESIGN

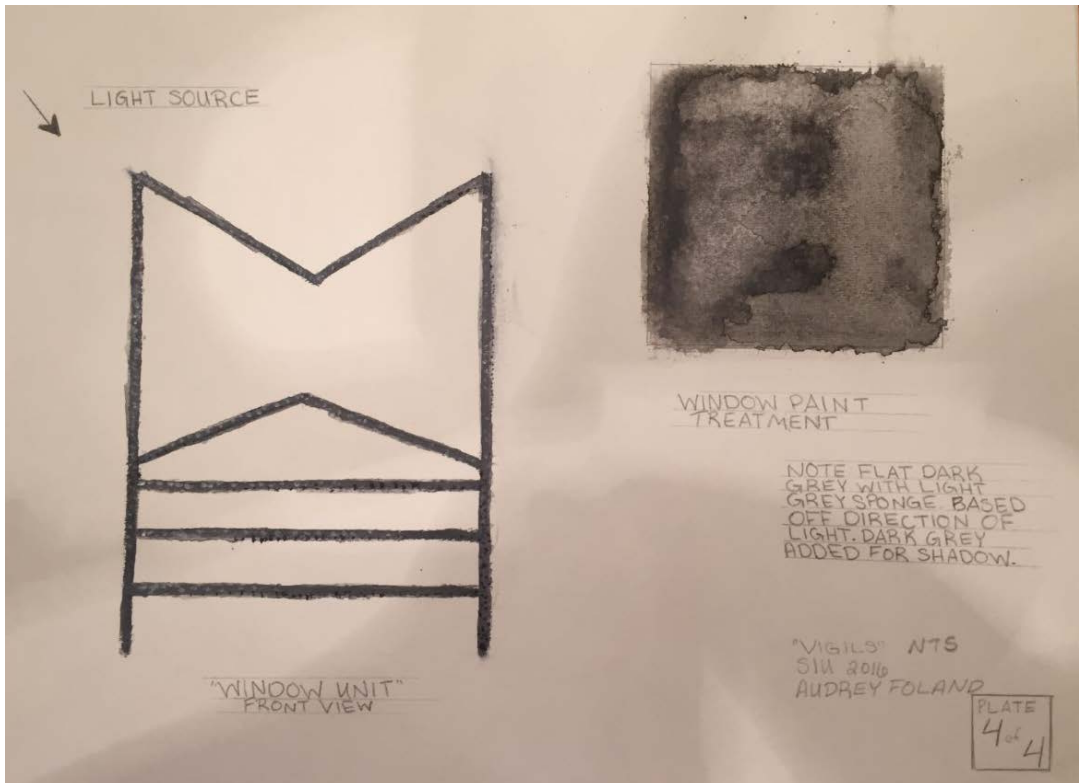
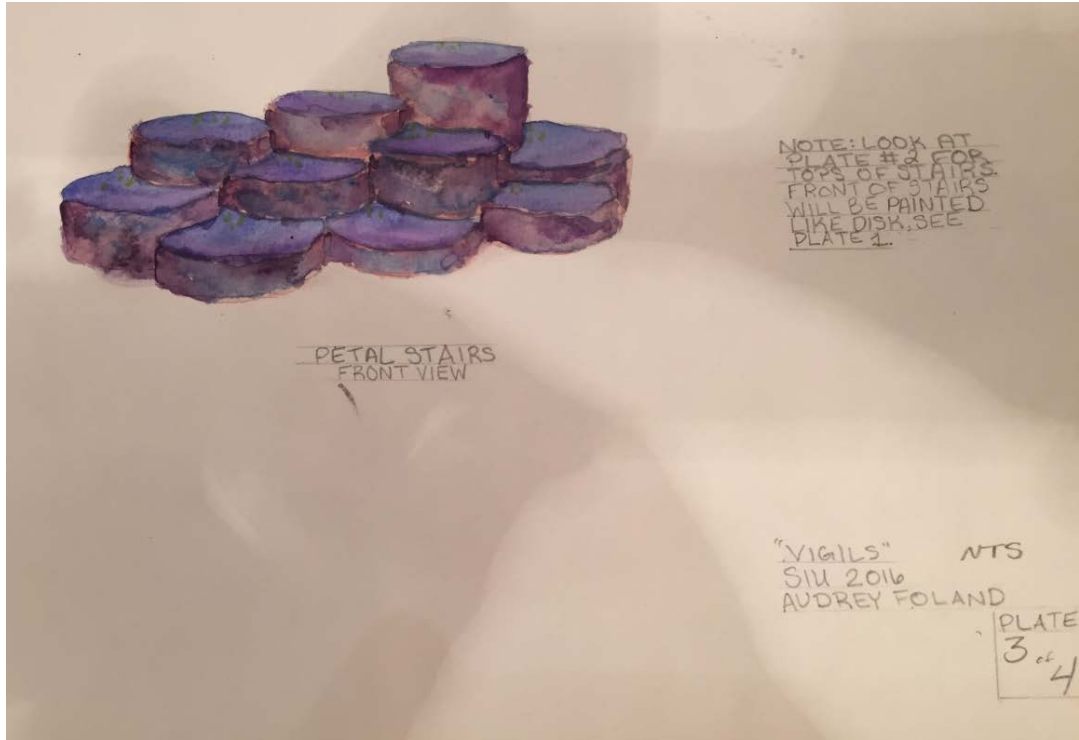
Summary of *Vigils* Floor

The way that I am painting the floor has many direct correlations with the text and plot of *Vigils*. I chose to paint the floor using a very heavy smoke, which is somewhat airy and deep. Throughout the script many people fly and this helps represent those clouds they are soaring above. It also directly correlates with all of the firemen scenes with the body. Since we are unable to use smoke in the Moe, I am creating smoke another way. Overall this stage shows you that you are stepping into a different world. This is the director's concept (surrealistic) and I am running with it. I have chosen to paint the floor majority blues and purples with accents of pinks and peaches.

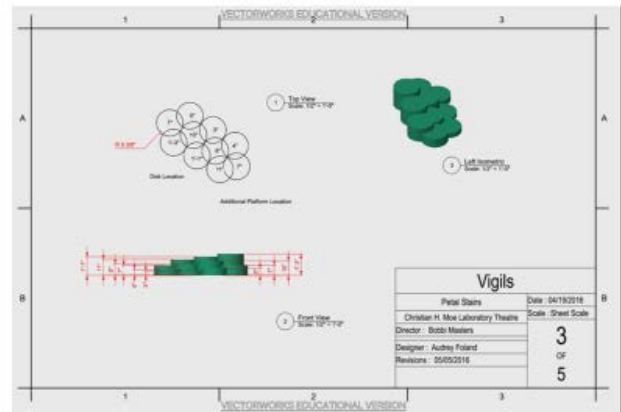
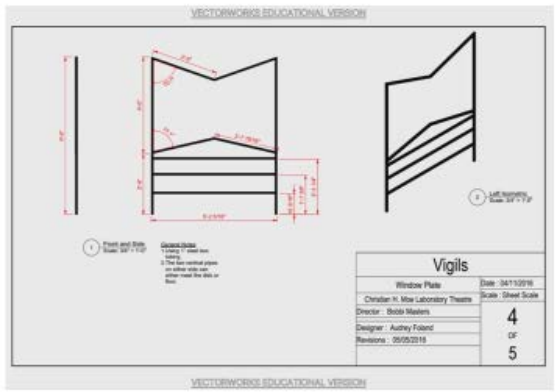
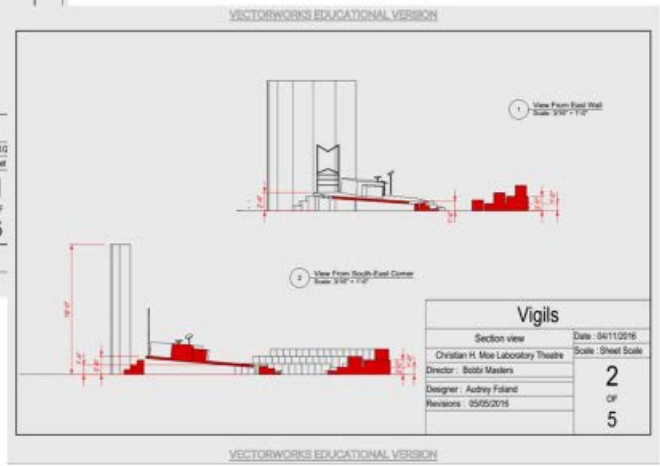
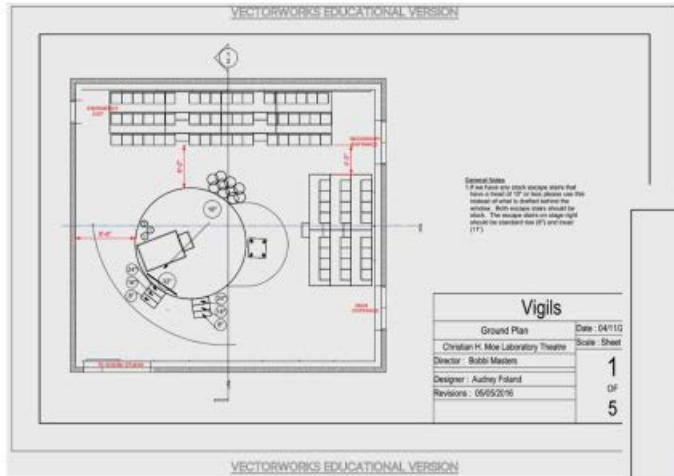


Paint Elevations





Drafting



The images in appendix E are used with permission by Audrey Foland.

APPENDIX F

DRAMATURGY

Labyrinth



Actor Packet



VIGILS DRAMATURGY PACKET

Compiled by Brooke Oehme

SIU Theater Fall 2016

Vigils Glossary

Vigils: This term refers to any time that people spend awake, watchful (sometimes praying or meditating), in preparation for a big event.

Religion: Vigils are held the evening before major religious ceremonies or holy days. People will stay awake and pray, taking part in other rituals such as reading prayers, singing hymns, or holding special services.

In Death: Many religions and groups practice vigils at the time of death/dying. Those taking part may light candles, pray, or share memories.

Small Talk: Basic rules of small talk (From Emily Post's *Etiquette*, 1922) –
“Think before you speak” – Don't bring up topics others don't know enough about to have a conversation on. (Eg Don't talk about babies to a bachelor)
“Don't be a bore” – Don't speak of illnesses & misfortunes
“You seldom regret what you left unsaid”

Suggested topics of conversation: (Etiquette Scholar)

The Food/Wine The Décor The Music/Entertainment
The Current Fashions The People in the Room Around You



“Powder Your Nose”

(For women) A Polite way to excuse yourself to go to the toilet. Restrooms used to have a sitting area where women could take care of their powder-based makeup, so this gave an excuse that was more polite for dinner conversation than “I have to go poop now” or “excuse me while I go cry in the bathroom”

Wooer's Spanish:

Solamente hablo un poco de espanol – Translation “I only speak a small amount of Spanish”

Red Spot on Jupiter



<http://www.nasa.gov/feature/goddard/jupiter-s-great-red-spot-a-swirling-mystery>

Over 150 years ago, scientists noted a red spot on Jupiter. The red spot is twice the size of Earth, and contains what is believed to be wind gusts peaking over 400 mph.

Because Jupiter is mostly gas, with no hard ground to dampen storms, the storm continues without ceasing. It is located between two jet streams of gaseous atmosphere.

Barges with cars & timber



Barges are large, slow-moving freight transport ships



Superman's Crystal Palace, *Superman II*
Superman's palace is called the Fortress of Solitude, and is where Superman goes when he needs to escape. The fortress contains crystals that contain all of his home planet's science & technology, as well as a sentient computer programmed to be Superman's birth father.

An ice castle in the middle of the North Pole = an alien teen's version of slamming & locking their bedroom door.



The Middle Finger Insult



1415.

There are many explanations that have been offered regarding why Western culture considers the extension of the middle finger an insult, but historically it can be traced back to 4th Century Athens where Diogenes, a philosopher, told people he would show them what he thought of his rival, and then extended his middle finger.

This was supposed to be a reference to the rival basically being a tiny penis (the folded fingers being the balls). And it meant he considered the man lewd, insulting, and a host of other insulting things.

Since then, references using the finger to indicate genitalia have continued, and insults involving hands are still a part of Western politics.

Poodle Skirts

1950s included a lot of circle skirts that had a cinched waist and a full shape. Often made with felt, skirts in bright colors were often decorated with an applique image of some kind (with teens, poodles were popular, with adults it could include things such as the Eiffel Tower).



Why were they so popular? Most of them were DIY – teens would make their own skirt. Simple fabrics could easily be dressed up in little time. And circle skirts were flattering on almost any body type.



Pg 20

Affectation – False behavior. Behavior that is designed to make someone seem more impressive than they are in reality. (Can also be used to seem more compassionate, caring, sweet, etc)

Pg 26

Type A Personality

People respond to stress differently. Friedman & Renman (2 cardiologists) developed a theory of personality based on the way they saw their patients relating to stress. In this theory, “Type A” personalities are: competitive; urgent to get things done (stick to schedules); hostile; easily angered; and more likely to seek drastic solutions to problems.

Reverberations: the continued effects of a single action. More than a single cause and effect, more like the ripples that appear when a bit of water is dropped into a larger pool.

Pg 30

Ten-Four: Radio code for “message received” (or “I heard & understand what you said”)

Pg 31

Boca Raton: A vacation city in Palm Beach, Florida. Literally means “Rat’s mouth” but was a nickname for a place where thieves would hide after committing a robbery.

Pg 36

Figs (Eating Figs as lovers do): Figs come from the area around Turkey, and are one of the healthiest foods in the world, figs have appeared in many types of writings (including being referenced as the forbidden fruit Eve offered Adam in the book of Genesis).

Pg 40

Rigoletto – Famous opera by Guiseppe Verdi. The plot revolves around a young woman who eventually allows herself to be killed in order to save the life of her true love, an unfaithful Duke.

Pg 41

“in a jiff” – quickly, in a second

Pg 46

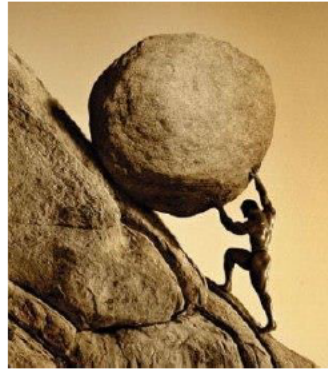
“Syphillis” – In the myth, it is actually Sisyphus

Why was Sisyphus pushing a rock?

Sisyphus was the king of Corinth who committed many crimes while on Earth (killing, rape, theft). Eventually he blamed Zeus for kidnapping a young woman (daughter to the river god Asopus, son of Poseidon). Zeus, enraged by this lie, sent Death after Sisyphus.

Sisyphus tricked Death into putting on handcuffs which trapped Death until the gods waged war to free Death and kill Sisyphus.

However, Sisyphus tricked Persephone, wife of Hades, who let him leave the Underworld with the promise to return in 3 days. Sisyphus did not return, which really pissed Hades off.



So Sisyphus, who tricked the gods, was supposed to be dead but wasn't, had pissed off both the god of Olympus/Heaven (Zeus) and the god of Hell (Hades).

As punishment, the gods made Sisyphus push a large boulder up an even larger hill. Every time he gets to the top of the hill, the boulder rolls back down, and he has to start again...and you thought your job was pointless!

Image & History Sources Sources

Etiquette & Small Talk

Etiquette by Emily Post, 1922 <http://www.bartleby.com/95/7.html> ;

Small Talk Basics

http://www.etiquettescholar.com/dining_etiquette/table_manners/dinner_conversation.html

Powder nose: <https://oneproductatime.com/2014/10/21/laura-mercier-smooth-focus-pressed-setting-powder-shine-control/>

Middle Finger History: Image <https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-origin-of-middle-finger>
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Type A Personality History <http://www.simplypsychology.org/personality-a.html>

Figs History: University of Leeds <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/yawya/news/news-figgy%20facts.html>

Sisyphus Image Source: <http://coconutheadsets.com/2009/12/29/sisyphus-for-startups/>

Floriography: Language of Flowers

Although many countries (including Persia & the Middle East) have used flowers to encode messages during war, during the Victorian era the practice of floriography became most popular.

Victorians had societal rules governing everything – and even outright prohibited flirting, questions, or controversy in many ways. So they began to assign meaning to flowers. The type of flower, color, and design placement all had meanings, which allowed people to have whole conversations with a single bouquet.

From “Floriography” website by ProFlowers: <http://www.proflowers.com/blog/floriography-language-flowers-victorian-era>

Daisies: In general, daisies mean Innocence, Loyal Love, “I’ll Never Tell” and compliments of Purity & Beauty

Red Roses: mean variations of “I love you” or comments of respect & beauty

Marigolds: Pretty love, Sacred, Affection, signify a caress, or sorrow

Marigolds & Mourning

Marigolds also have special meaning for people in mourning.

The Aztecs used marigold leaves to:

- Stomachache
- Parasites
- Liver illnesses
- Vomiting
- Toothache

Because of its huge part in the community life, and its healing ability, marigolds were also used in various religious festivals.

During the Dia De Los Muertos (or Day of the Dead), it is believed that the

beautiful smell of marigolds can actually wake the dead and bring them back into the world of the living.



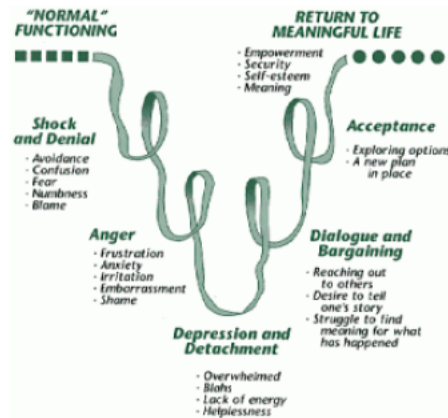
Cemetery in Mexico on the Day of the Dead

Stages of Grief (Kubler-Ross model of mourning)

In 1969, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross established the theory of Five Stages of Grief in her book *On Death & Dying*.

The Stages include

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance



The Stages of Grief theory helped put grief theory into everyday conversation – grief was demystified and people had new aspects of grief to discuss in public.

However, a simplified “stages” theory didn’t fit into the experience many had of grief. It was too passive for many – grief is not something that happens to a person, and getting through grief involves several tasks that must be accomplished. Each death, or loss, presents unique challenges that must be faced, questions that must be answered, before the work of grief can be considered complete.

Grief is work.

It is often not work that can be done alone.

And each person needs to figure out for themselves when their grief is “done”.

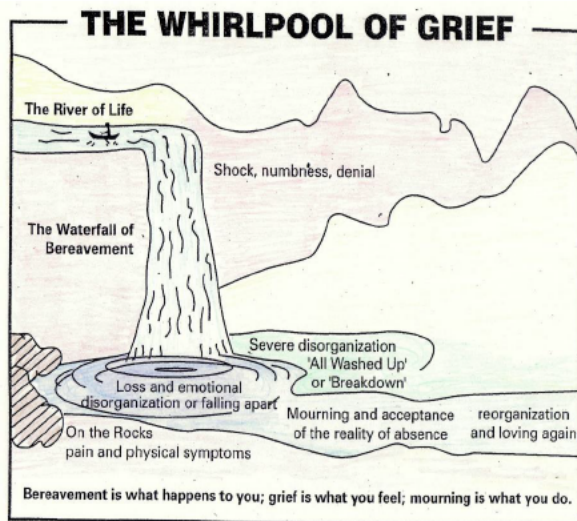
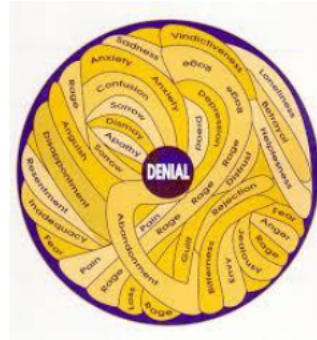
The Circle and Mourning

There are many approaches to grief and mourning, but it is interesting to note how many of them involve some form of a circle.

The Grief Wheel GRIEF WHEEL



Ball of Grief



So WHY circles?

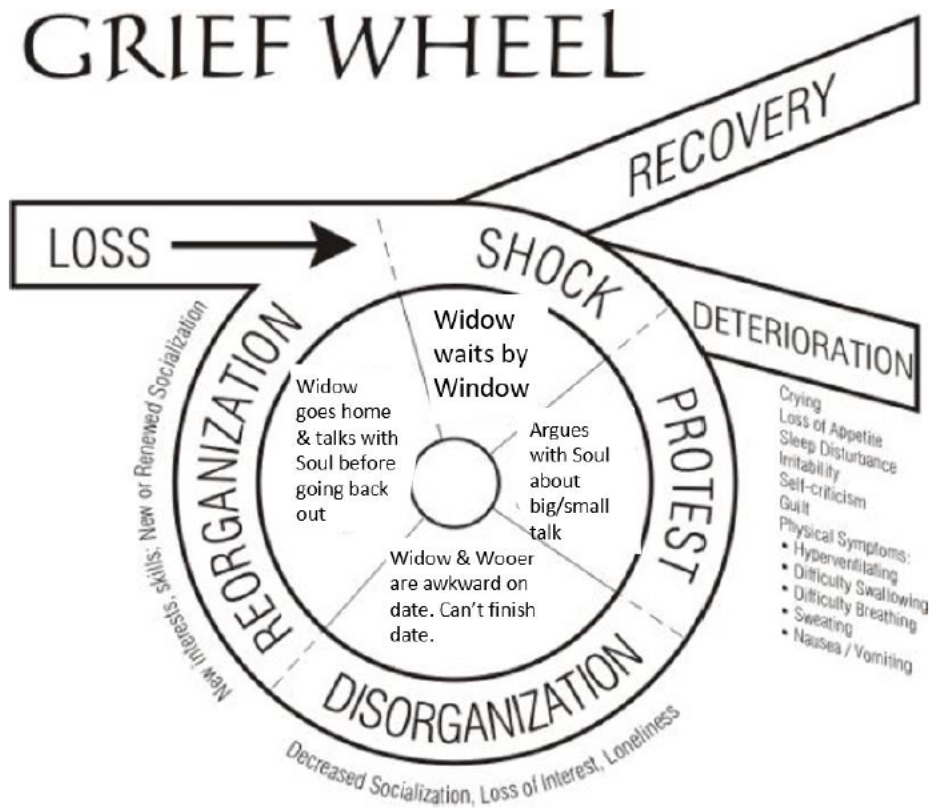
In general, it is agreed that grief is a process, not a straight journey from Point A to Point B.

Grief never travels a straight line. People going through grief can appear to be recovering (for days, months, years) before something happens that drags them back into grief. Mandalas, labyrinths, and flowers such as marigolds are all used in grief counseling to promote the idea that grief is eternal. You can still be a whole person (a whole circle), but grief never ends.

Circular Pattern in *Vigils*

The pattern of *Vigils* reflects much of this circular pattern. The Widow's grief is not a straight line – she is recovered enough to go on a date, but she is unable to finish that date. Soul escapes, and is brought back home. Body keeps re-living the moments where he knocks down a door to rescue a child moments before he dies himself.

This pattern mimics the reality of grief, and shows how each time something happens there is a choice between whether the Widow allows this to help her heal, or sends her into greater deterioration and grief.



Famous Poems on Death & Dying

“Remember” – Christina Rossetti

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you plann'd:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

Joan Didion (on Memory)

“Memory fades, memory adjusts,
memory conforms to what we think we remember.”

“God Lay Dead in Heaven,” Stephen Crane

God lay dead in heaven;
Angels sang the hymn of the end;
Purple winds went moaning,
Their wings drip-dripping
With blood
That fell upon the earth.
It, groaning thing,
Turned black and sank.
Then from the far caverns
Of dead sins
Came monsters, livid with desire.
They fought,
Wrangled over the world,
A morsel.
But of all sadness this was sad —
A woman's arms tried to shield
The head of a sleeping man
From the jaws of the final beast

“If I Should Die,” Emily Dickinson

If I should die,
And you should live,
And time should gurgle on,
And morn should beam,
And noon should burn,
As it has usual done;
If birds should build as early,
And bees as bustling go,—
One might depart at option
From enterprise below!
'Tis sweet to know that stocks
will stand
When we with daisies lie,
That commerce will continue,
And trades as briskly fly.
It make the parting tranquil
And keeps the soul serene,
That gentlemen so sprightly
Conduct the pleasing scene!

The images in appendix F are used with permission by Brooke Oehme.

APPENDIX G

PUBLICITY PHOTOS



APPENDIX H

SOUND DESIGN

Cue Sheet

Cue	Description	Cue Type	File / Info
A	Soft, Peaceful, Inspiring Background Music Instrumental -- relaxdaily N°058	Playlist	5 tracks
B	Fade out all earlier audio cues	Fade out	Fade out all earlier audio cues
C	baby1	Audio File	baby1.mp3
D	Roaring Flame	Audio File	D:\...\Roaring Flame.mp3
E	Fade out baby1	Stop&Fade	Fade out C D
F	baby1	Audio File	D:\...\baby1.mp3
G	Roaring Flame	Audio File	D:\...\Roaring Flame.mp3
H	Fade out baby1	Fade out	Fade out F
I	collapse2	Audio File	D:\...\collapse2.mp3
K	mirror breaking 1	Audio File	window break.mp3
L	Enrique Iglesias- Bailando (English Version) HD lyrics	Audio File	Enrique Iglesias- Bailando (English Version) HD lyrics.mp3
M	Fade out Enrique Iglesias- Bailando (English Version) HD lyrics	Fade out	Fade out L
N	baby1	Audio File	D:\...\baby1.mp3
O	Roaring Flame	Audio File	D:\...\Roaring Flame.mp3
P	Fade out baby1	Fade out	Fade out N
Q	collapse2	Audio File	D:\...\collapse2.mp3
R	baby1	Audio File	D:\...\baby1.mp3
S	Roaring Flame	Audio File	D:\...\Roaring Flame.mp3
T	Fade out baby1	Fade out	Fade out R
U	collapse2	Audio File	D:\...\collapse2.mp3
V	Judgement2	Audio File	D:\...\Judgement2.mp3
W	Stop Judgement	Stop	Stop V
X	baby1	Audio File	D:\...\baby1.mp3
Y	Roaring Flame	Audio File	D:\...\Roaring Flame.mp3
Z	Fade out baby1	Fade out	Fade out X
AA	collapse2	Audio File	D:\...\collapse2.mp3
BB	ocean waves	Audio File	D:\...\ocean waves.mp3
CC	alarmb	Audio File	Ringin-clock.mp3
DD	Stop alarmb	Stop	Stop CC
FF	radio	Audio File	radio.mp3
GG	radio	Audio File	D:\...\radio.mp3
HH	radio	Audio File	D:\...\radio.mp3
II	fire_truck_alarm	Audio File	D:\...\fire_truck_alarm.mp3
JJ	baby1	Audio File	baby1.mp3
KK	Fade out baby1	Fade out	Fade out JJ

LL	A Thousand Years - Christina Perri Lyrics	Audio File	D:\...\A Thousand Years - Christina Perri Lyrics.mp3
MM	Fade out A Thousand Years - Christina Perri Lyrics	Fade out	Fade out LL
MM 2	baby1	Audio File	D:\...\baby1.mp3
MM 3	Fade out baby1	Fade out	Fade out MM2
NN	Judgement2	Audio File	D:\...\Judgement2.mp3
OO	Stop Judgement	Stop	Stop NN
PP	Missy Elliott Work It	Audio File	Missy Elliott Work It.mp3
QQ	Fade out Missy Elliott Work It	Fade out	Fade out PP
RR	baby1	Audio File	baby1.mp3
SS	Fade out baby1	Fade out	Fade out RR
TT	Ringin-clock	Audio File	Ringin-clock.mp3
TT2	Stop Ringin-clock	Stop	Stop TT
WW	Heartbeat	Audio File	D:\...\Heartbeat.mp3
XX	Stop Heartbeat	Stop	Stop WW
ZZ	The Polyphonic Spree - Light And Day [HQ]	Audio File	The Polyphonic Spree - Light And Day [HQ].mp3

APPENDIX I

VISUAL RESEARCH

Marigolds



<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e3-3fc7-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>



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<https://pixabay.com/en/marigold-flower-burgundy-green-896360/>



https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/red-tulip-resurrection-black-white-peace-474921658?irgwc=1&utm_medium=Affiliate&utm_campaign=Bobek%20Ltd&utm_source=39150



<https://pixabay.com/en/marigold-field-nature-landscape-414343/>

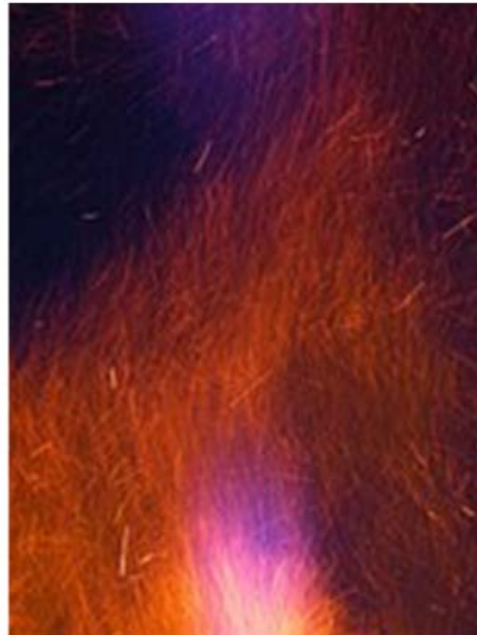
Fire



<https://pixabay.com/en/fire-flame-electrically-energy-1072680/>



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Vigil



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/candlelight-candles-54512/>

Day of the Dead



http://thumb10.shutterstock.com/thumb_large/2912773/312996647/stock-vector-vector-hand-drawn-illustration-of-orange-ornamental-skull-with-mustache-for-day-of-dead-312996647.jpg

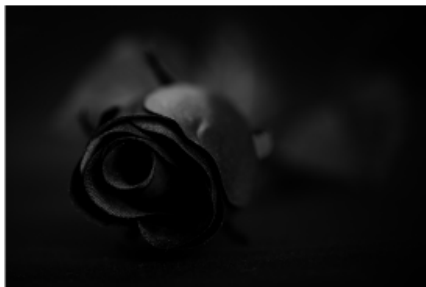


http://thumb7.shutterstock.com/thumb_large/97482/118550191/stock-vector-skull-and-roses-colorful-day-of-the-dead-card-118550191.jpg



http://thumb7.shutterstock.com/photos/thumb_large/614824/168995879.jpg

Grief



<http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/view-image.php?image=25694&picture=dark-rose>



https://www.shutterstock.com/image-illustration/emotional-grief-depression-result-broken-romantic-123563185?irgwc=1&utm_medium=Affiliate&utm_campaign=Bobek%20Ltd&utm_source=39150



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<https://pixabay.com/en/mural-girl-balloon-heart-graffiti-1331783/>



<https://thumbs.dreamstime.com/m/abstract-broken-heart-d-vector-illustration-concept-43595974.jpg>



https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2016/03/12/07/33/puzzle-piece-1251618__180.jpg

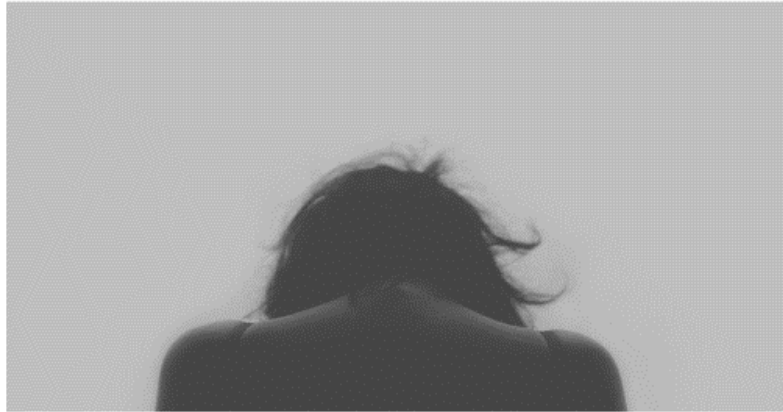


<https://pixabay.com/en/image-surreal-painting-art-1094061/>



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/alone-blond-despair-girl-333989/>

<https://images.pexels.com/photos/157772/woman-sad-wedding-sadness-157772.jpeg?w=940&h=650&auto=compress&cs=tinyrgb>



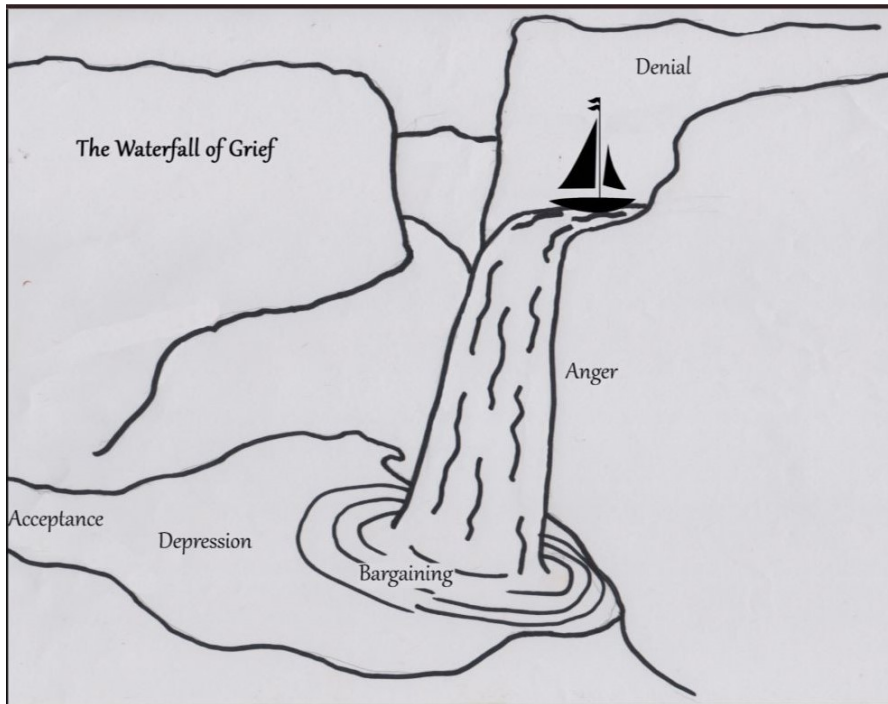
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/black-and-white-person-woman-girl-3351/>



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/emotions-feelings-emotion-feeling-89517/>



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Beyond_grief.jpg



Waterfall of Grief permission by Eric Cope

Soul



<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/383678?sortBy=Relevance&ft=soul&offset=20&rpp=20∓pos=24>



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c9/Michelangelo_Buonarroti_-_The_Damned_Soul_-_WGA15521.jpg/80px-Michelangelo_Buonarroti_-_The_Damned_Soul_-_WGA15521.jpg



https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/young-boy-astral-travel-mystical-rapture-484176574?irgwc=1&utm_medium=Affiliate&utm_campaign=Pexels%20GmbH&utm_source=106918

Sky/Flying



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/sky-clouds-cloudy-weather-113/>



<http://www.photos-public-domain.com/2011/11/28/clouds-at-sunrise/>

Space/Flying



<https://pixabay.com/en/stars-cluster-galaxy-milky-way-920761/>



<http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/view-image.php?image=67167&picture=estrelas-no-ceu-noturno>



<https://pixabay.com/en/star-clusters-rosette-nebula-star-67616/>



<http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/pictures/160000/velka/pink-star-roses-of-the-galaxies.jpg>

Hope



<http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/view-image.php?image=19660&picture=into-the-tunnel&large=1>



https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/woman-blooming-poppy-field-sunset-429193525?irgwc=1&utm_medium=Affiliate&utm_campaign=Bobek%20Ltd&utm_source=39150



<http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/view-image.php?image=113884&picture=woman-praising-sunset>

APPENDIX J
PRODUCTION PHOTOS



Scene 1

Widow: I'm not ready for this.

Soul: Yes you are. Just open the door (10).



Scene 1

Soul: My last thought is about the big red spot on Jupiter, which somebody told me once is actually a huge storm, twice as big as the earth.

Body: That's one big storm.

Soul: And then the roof falls on me (15).



Scene 1

Soul: This is the worst thing I ever did. I'm twelve years old. We had this evil old neighbor, Mrs. Van Haften. (The Widow, as Mrs. Van Haften, cackles.) We weren't allowed in her backyard so any balls that went over her fence were gone forever.

Widow: They're gone forever. (She cackles.)

Soul: I was just going to scare her.

Body: Take that, Mrs. Van Haften (16-17).



Scene 1

Soul: She isn't a very good dancer (17).



Scene 1

Body: I'm just doing my job. (21)



Scene 1

Soul: ...And I was on my way to final judgement. (The Soul starts to fly up toward the final judgment.) But my wife caught me. (24)



Soul: And then I do the worst thing I've ever done. I leave (25).



Scene 1

Widow: Okay. Okay. Okay (25).



Scene 2

Widow: I barely ever sleep anymore. And since my husband dies I stopped dreaming. I have to remember my old dreams. I used to dream that I could fly. But I never actually flew. I was always teaching other people to fly. (31)



Scene 2

Body: (The Body brings a marigold wrapped in white paper.) It's okay. We'll have another one. We'll have ten more.

Widow: But we don't//And then one day you died (40).



Scene 3

Soul: Is it time for my hug? (43)



Scene 3

Wooer: So what's it gonna be? Is it the Soul or me?

Widow: I need to take this slow.

Wooer: You should choose me. I'm here, I'm in this room, I'm alive. (45)



Scene 3

Body: I am Syphilis (47).



Scene 3

Body: It's better this way. This way you won't have any memories. (48)



Scene 3

Soul: And I fly. At first I'm scared of what's to come. I fly over the whole earth. And even though I don't have eyes I see everyone. If they're awake I see their lives, and if they're asleep I see their dreams. And what I see makes me laugh. (The Soul laughs.) (51)



Scene 3

Widow: Are you going to be okay down there?

Body: Sure. I get to lie in the dark all day every day and all night every night. I get to rest. (51)



Scene 3

Widow: And then I am finally alone. (She is alone.) And I breathe. (She breathes.) And my heart beats. (Her heart beats.) Out of reflex. Out of no will of my own. Because that's what hearts do. They beat and they break. And then I sleep. (She lies down to sleep.) And I dream that I am flying (51-52).



Scene 3

Widow: And then the sun rises and it's another day. (The back wall disappears. There is a sea of marigolds and perfect white light.) I wake up and I feel reborn (52).



Scene 3

Wooer: I knock on the door. (He knocks on the door.) And you say, "I'll just be a minute! I just got out of the shower!" And I say, "Take your time!" And I spray breath-freshener in my mouth. (53).

APPENDIX K

PERMISSIONS



Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>

Permissions

1 message

Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>

Fri, May 5, 2017 at 11:55 AM

To: Audrey Foland <arfoland@siu.edu>, Deirdre Anne Rose <deidrerose@siu.edu>, Andrew Kenneth Xavier Beyke <andrewkxbeyke@siu.edu>, Tyler Wyvell <wyvell@siu.edu>

Hi all, I am finalizing my *Vigils* thesis and would like to include the some of the documentation you presented.

Dee- I'd like to use renderings, photos from fittings and possibly your inspiration presentation.

Andrew- light plot

Audrey- Research images, floor research image, paint elevations,groundplan. Unfortunately, there aren't any images on Box of the model (the white and actual), I'd like to use them, if you still have them.

Tyler- Sound cue

Brooke- actor packet

Please reply back with your approval.

Very best regards,
Bobbi

--

www.bobbimasters.com



Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>

Re: Permissions

1 message

Deirdre Anne Rose <deidrrose@siu.edu>
To: Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>

Fri, May 5, 2017 at 12:24 PM

You may use anything you need of my work. Do you need me to bring/email/?? anything? Or is everything you need on Box?

Deirdre Rose

Department of Theater

Southern Illinois University (SIU)

deidrrose@siu.edu

618.534.1268

From: Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, May 5, 2017 11:55:49 AM

To: Audrey Rainier Foland; Deirdre Anne Rose; Andrew Kenneth Xavier Beyke; Tyler Wyvell

Re: Permissions

1 message

Andrew Kenneth Xavier Beyke <andrewkxbeyke@siu.edu>
To: Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>

Fri, May 5, 2017 at 11:57 AM

You have my permission

On May 5, 2017 11:56 AM, Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi all, I am finalizing my *Vigils* thesis and would like to include the some of the documentation you presented.**Dee-** I'd like to use renderings, photos from fittings and possibly your inspiration presentation.**Andrew-** light plot**Audrey-** Research images, floor research image, paint elevations,groundplan. Unfortunately, there aren't any images on Box of the model (the white and actual), I'd like to use them, if you still have them.**Tyler-** Sound cue**Brooke-** actor packet

Please reply back with your approval.

Very best regards,
Bobbi

--

Re: Permissions

1 message

Audrey Rainier Foland <arfoland@siu.edu>
To: Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>

Thu, May 11, 2017 at 9:15 PM

Yes! I will get you the model images asap.

Audrey Foland

From: Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2017 11:55:49 AM
To: Audrey Rainier Foland; Deirdre Anne Rose; Andrew Kenneth Xavier Beyke; Tyler Wyvell
Subject: Permissions

Hi all, I am finalizing my *Vigils* thesis and would like to include the some of the documentation you presented.

Dee- I'd like to use renderings, photos from fittings and possibly your inspiration presentation.

Andrew- light plot

Audrey- Research images, floor research image, paint elevations,groundplan. Unfortunately, there aren't any images on

Search Facebook

Robbi Home

Lisel M. Kraft
Messenger

Lisel M. Kraft
6 mutual friends including Kirsten Easton and Kelley McGahey Jordan

MAY 5TH, 12:03PM

Hey, I am finishing my thesis for Vigils and would like to use some of the images that you created for the design presentations. I addressed that you were no longer a part of the show but your work was very influential in the shaping of it. Can you please approve this request? I hope you are well.

MAY 5TH, 7:56PM

Lisel M. Kraft accepted your request.

Lisel added you on Messenger. Add her back to reach her quickly when you want to chat.

I will have to find the images and notes, but I definitely still have them and would be happy to share.

I'm sorry I wasn't able to be part of the finished product. I did look up the pictures though. Looked like a great show.

Yeah, I really wished you were still around but it was pretty. I still have a lot of what you created so there's no need to generate anything. I can send you an invite to the Vigils box account, if you are no longer on it?

I'll check--forgot my password, so it'll take a few.

Looks like I still have access.

I'll create a new folder in the lights folder and not what I find in there. It looks like the

Type a message...

Options

- Search in Conversation
- Edit Nicknames
- Change Color
- Change Emoji
- Notifications

Facebook Profile
<https://facebook.com/Lisel>

Re: Dramaturgical Packet

1 message

Brooke Oehme <brookeoehme@gmail.com>
To: Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>

Fri, May 26, 2017 at 8:43 PM

Bobbi,
Yes, please use it as you need.
Good to see you, too!
Thanks,
Brooke

On May 26, 2017 8:35 PM, "Bobbi Masters" <bobbimasters@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Brooke, so good seeing you last night (and I'm glad to have caught Rory!) I was wondering if I could get your permission to use the dramaturgical packet in my thesis? I write about the labyrinth and the effect it had on Audrey and I asked Anne and she thought it would be a good idea (I was concerned it may be too long). Please let me know when you have a chance.

Best,
Bobbi

--

www.bobbimasters.com

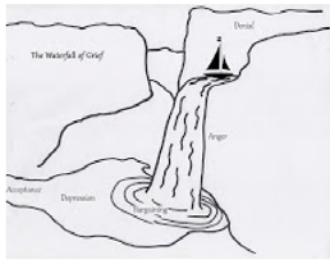
Waterfall of Grief

1 message

Eric Cope <copeeb@gmail.com>
To: Bobbi Masters <bobbimasters@gmail.com>

Sat, May 27, 2017 at 4:15 PM

Attached is the illustration I made. You have permission to use this image in your thesis.



bobbi3.jpg
1498K

Tyler Wyvell
Messenger

15 mutual friends including Christian Boswell and Emmanuel Castillo
Crew Member at Arby's
Lives in Carbondale, Illinois

MAY 26TH, 8:56PM
Hey, can I use your sound cue sheet for my thesis?

FRI 12:06AM
Tyler Wyvell accepted your request.

Yes

FRI 8:19AM
Thank you!

Options

- Search in Conversation
- Edit Nicknames
- Change Color
- Change Emoji
- Notifications

Facebook Profile
<https://facebook.com/PerturbedWalrus>

VITA
Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Bobbi Masters

Bobbimasters@gmail.com

Texas Woman's University
Bachelor of Arts, Theater, December 1999

Thesis Title:
The Archeology of Memory: Directing *Vigils* by Noah Haidle.

Major Professor: Olusegun Ojewuyi